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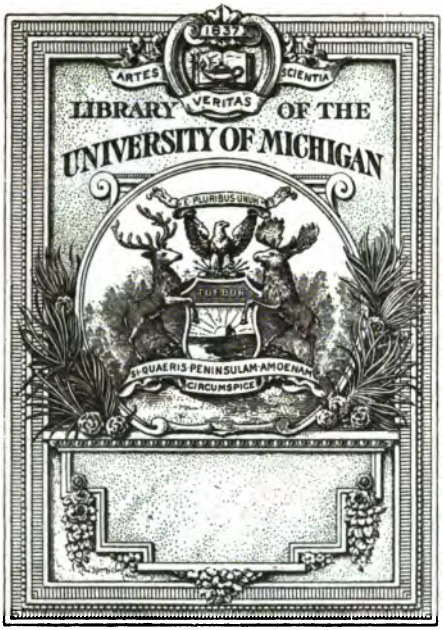
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THE

DRAMATIC WORKS

OF

29777

AARON HILL, Esq;

VOLUME THE SECOND.

CONTAINING,

Muses in Mourning.

Zara, to which is added, an Interlude, never before Printed.

Snake in the Grass.

Alzira.

Saul.

Daraxes.

Merope.

Roman Revenge.

Insolvent: or, Filial Piety.

To which are added,

Some Love Letters, by the Author.

LONDON:

Printed for T. Lownds, near the Corner of Salisbury-Court, Fleet-street. MDCCLX.

THE

MUSES in MOURNING.

AN

OPERA.

THE

MUSES in MOURNING.

ACT I. SCENE I.

The curtain drawing up, discovers a scene of Mount Parnassus; Pegasus in the proper attitude. The Muses, in garlands, and dresses, expressive of their characters, ascend, successively, into sight, from between the two points, and come down, on the right, and left, into their respective places, distinguished by niches, adorned with pilasters, supporting cornices, with compartments, in which are painted their several musical instruments: after which, appears a globe of light, like the evening sun, above the hill, which, descending out of sight, discovers Apollo in his seat, at the head of the Nine Muses: an altar at the foot of the hill.

AIR I.

First division, with a trumpet.

Apol. NOW with joy, O ye Muses! let the trumpet of glory
Sound the triumphs of fame, for the heroes of story. [*Martial.*

Second division, with a flute.

Now, let the flute, attemp'ring gladness,
Sigh, to the soul, in tuneful sadness. [*Plaintive.*

Third diviſion, with a violin.

Till the gay viſion, ſtarting, earneſt, and airy,
Bids the wanton meaſures vary. [*Wanton.*

Fourth diviſion, with a baſe-viol.

But, hark! each changing note, new paſſion ſhakes;
Each aweful ſound a deep impreſſion makes;
The heart glows, conſcious; and the boſom quakes. [*Aweful.*

Fifth diviſion, with a hautbois.

O'er the mind, on each occaſion,
Muſic brings a ſoft invaſion;
Now, 'tis hope; 'tis, now, perſuaſion. [*Perſuaſive.*

Sixth diviſion, with a lute.

She loves, and Graces, now---all, ſmile, tranſporting,
Each melting note dies ſoft--each word is courting. [*Amorous.*

Seventh diviſion, with a flagelet.

But, if a new purpoſe is light, as the air is,
Still to the ſubject, the harmony varies. [*Figgiſh.*

Eighth diviſion, with an organ.

In ſounding anthems muſic ſwells deſire,
Till, loud, and ſolemn, all the glowing choir
Flame, with expanded ſoul, in ſacred fire. [*Solemn.*

Ninth diviſion, to a French horn.

Fame's empire the Muſes inherit;
They praiſe, and reward, and give ſpirit;
They lend an ambition to merit. [*Hunting tune.*

Apol. to the Muſes.] Tuneful creators of immortal ſounds!
Ye ſouls of muſic, reſt.—Behold, who comes!
Pallas! great partner of our heaven-born care!
Some danger o'er the Muſes' empire low'rs;
High Pindus, conſcious bows, his laurell'd top,
And whole Parnaſſus, trembling to his root,
Groans with impending dread!—Hail, Goddeſs, hail!
[*At the entrance of Pallas, Apollo and the Muſes riſe, and bow, from their places; then reſeat themſelves.*
—Daughter of Jove! Imperial charmer, hail!
Doubly victorious Power! whom arts, and arms,
Dependent—with eternal empire crown.

Pal. Spring of ætherial day! thou *eye* of heaven!

Fair

Fair light's original! harmonious God!
Guardian of Wit, and Health! Apollo, hail! ——
—Late, has my olive, breath'd on by the Nine,
And bath'd, and temper'd, in Aonian dews,
Shed peaceful influence on the weſtern world;
Huſh'd is the voice of war; and waking realms
Hearken, delighted, to the Muſes' call:
Genius, rekindling, glows, with promis'd wit,
And dawns faint meaning on the nations round.
Apol. Fruit of thy care! thou bright'ner of the ſoul!
Pal. Fall'n *Italy*, long deaf to every charm,
But muſic's voice, and love's;——imperious *Spain*,
Loud *France*, and ſullen *England's* moping ſpleen,
Join'd with the buſtling *Dutchman's* plodding power,
Devoted, all, conſpire to ſigh for wit:
Each nation's Genius, ſeparate, ſeeks my ſmile;
Each to my courted feet, his offerings brings,
And prays to be protected, and inſpir'd.
Partial to none, but conſcious, what reſpect
Is yours, celeſtial Muſes! and your God's!
Hither I guided their unanſwer'd prayer:
Reſolv'd to have no choice, but your decree.
Apol. Goddeſs of Wiſdom, wiſely haſt thou judg'd!
Uniting, thus, when diff'rent Pow'rs concur,
Each makes his influence double.

AIR II.

Wit and wiſdom greatly vary,
Tho' the world ſuppoſe 'em one:
Each alone, they both miſcarry,
One too dull, and one too airy:
Neither's taſk compleatly done.
Wou'd you give new force to either?
Take, and join 'em both together.

Pal. Approach, ye Nations! let your ſuits be heard,
The Muſes, and their leading Light, all, ſmile,
Indulgent to your hopes.

AIR III.

The voice of war ſhall, now, be heard no longer,
The ſhade of death, no more, ſhall darken joy;
The jocund ſhepherd's reed, now, ſounding ſtronger,
In love, and peace, ſhall muſic's charms employ:
The fame of *wit* ſhall, now, cauſe emulation,
And new ambition fire each riſing nation.

Pal. Queen of the nations! far-fam'd *Italy!*
Once, a diſtinguiſh'd name.

Enter Genius of Italy; his dreſs, like that of a lover, in an Opera, with a plume of feathers, and white ſatin robe, embroidered with flaming hearts, intermix'd with muſical inſtruments: in his hands, a roll of muſic ſcores, round a double-headed gilt ſtaff.

RECITATIVO.

G. of It. Inſpiring Power!
And ye, fair Muſes! once adorning me!
And by my ſons moſt honour'd! yet once more,
Give me, to ſhine ſupreme, in envied wit;
And deign to take theſe offerings, which I bring,
Devoted to your ſhrine.

AIR IV.

Take, ye Muſes, take, ye Muſes,
Wealth, that idle greatneſs chuſes;
Sounding nonſenſe, ſweetly chiming,
Airs for Opera, ſoftly rhiming;
Muſic ſcores, the pride of ſcening,
Take our ſongs, and give us meaning.

All the while this air is ſinging, he lets run a long roll of muſic ſcore, which, at the end of the ſong, he lays down on the altar.

Pal.

Pal. Genius of Spain, unbending, and elate!
Of height unſhorten'd and unvaried nod!
Raiſe thy ſlow foot, and ſtep ſerenely on.

Enter Genius of Spain, like a formal Spaniſh Don, in a bays cloak; a long ſpada by his ſide; and, under each arm, a large bag of money.

G. of Sp. I thank ye, Gods! you, from the youth of time,
Knew, and confeſs'd your gifts moſt due to Spain.
My empire, like eternity, no line
Not circular, can figure; for the ſun,
In his wide compaſs, when he rounds the globe,
Forms but a ring, the meaſure of my crown,
And ſets, and riſes, in the realms, I rule.
All unaccuſtom'd I to hope in vain,
Let my due thanks, thus low, anticipate
Apollo's purpos'd bounty; what to aſk
Yet, ſcarce reſolv'd:--- but what poſſeſs'd, far known!

AIR V.

Bleſs'd with all, that's worth deſiring,
In our taſte, alone, too low
Keep our fancy ſtill aſpiring,
Let our judgment overflow:
Swell our ſenſe above bravada,
And accept this warlike ſpada;
[*Draws his ſpada, and lays it down, as alſo the gold and ſilver, on the altar.*
Strongly to guard, what Muſes ſlightly hold,
Inſpiring ſilver, and inflaming gold.

Pal. Genius of France! gay ſpirit of loud delight,
Lively concealer of deſign, in mirth!
Dance into ſight; and, at the Muſes' feet,
Lay thy meant off'rings, and addreſs thy prayer.

Enter

Enter Genius of France, dreſs'd like one of their petites maîtres; the colour of his coat white, embroidered with flower-de-luces of gold.

G. of Fr. Fam'd for vivacity, and inbred fire,
From fruitful France all nations borrow wit,
The vivid growth of nature! — What I aſk,
Is, that Apollo, ſince I ſhine, ſupplied,
With-holds his ſmile from others. — 'Tis my fame,
To lend my lights, and glitter among nations:
To guide their learning, faſhions, thoughts, and taſte,
And, oft, to change, and to be follow'd, ever.

AIR VI.

Fond of the wit, we ſo long have been fam'd for,
Still, O Apollo! confine it to France:
'Tis a requeſt, that we cannot be blam'd for,
Modeſt, as any, we uſe to advance;
Take, in acknowledgment, all the French favours,
Which, for an age, over Europe have paſs'd:
Dreſſes to ſcrm, and to faſhion behaviours,
This is our empire — O, grant it to laſt.

During the ſong, he draws out of his pockets, and throws about, a great quantity of toupees, black bags, ſhoulder knots, ribbons, and feathers.

Pal. Advance, Dutch Mightineſs! huge growth of care!
Induſtrious heavineſs! unſhining gem!
Dull dignity! untowering eminence!
Holland's ſwoll'n Genius! next, preſent thy claim;
Envied, by none, be wonder'd at by all:
And ſpeak thy blunt propoſal.

Enter Genius of Holland, like a fat Dutch ſkipper; under his left arm a puncheon: in his right hand, the impal'd lion's ſtaff, headed with the hat of Liberty; to which is hanging a ſtring of herrings.

G. of

G. of Hol. —They ſay that I want wit—ſhou'd that be true,
As true it may be, ſince I deal not in't;
'Tis fit, that I ſhou'd buy ſome—— ſell it me,
Apollo! good Mynheer! and company!
And take, becauſe my bargains, all, are juſt,
Take, in exchange, two quick commodities,
Of price, to purchaſe wit, beyond my call,
If Muſes are fair traders. [*Preſents his puncheon of brandy, and ſtring of herrings.*

AIR VII.

Tho' wit may be proud of its worth,
Let none undervalue good drinking;
Here's brandy can ſoon give it birth,
And raiſe a weak head to ſtrong-thinking:
Pickle herring's an excellent whet,
And will love of good brandy beget:
And, ſince wit is of brandy's conferring,
The Muſes ſhou'd love pickle herring.

Pal. Genius of England! thou art laſt, advance,
Worthieſt, yet, leaſt aſſur'd —— for ever ſtand,
Thou, ſelf-ſupported: ſtrongeſt, when alone,
Nor weak, but where aſſiſted. —— Plain, and brave,
Be bold to ſpeak thy claim.

Enter Genius of England, like a gentleman-commoner, with a ſquare cap: in one hand a pen in an inkhorn; in the other, a few roll'd ſheets of blank paper.

G. of Eng. I, conſcious of no public want, but one,
Derive that want from plenty: — Smile, ye Nine!
Nor thou, Apollo! great inſpirer! frown,
But firm my honeſt prayer. — All England writes;
Learn'd, and unlearn'd, each ſex, all ages *write!*
Untaught, unaſk'd, unprais'd, unread, they write.
O, take theſe ſheets, ye Muſes! harmleſs, yet, [*Preſents the blank paper, and pen and ink, on the altar.*

And

And blank, as witlings' brains are. — Set us *copies*;
And bleſs, indulgent to our courteous readers,
Bleſs the wide-ſcribling nation, with new ſkill,
That flatt'ry, when it *paints*, may learn to *ſhade*,
And faction, to *enlighten*

AIR VIII.

Wou'd Apollo, to puzzle the Muſes all Nine,
Contrive, how to ſet 'em a taſk without end;
Let 'em influence *party* with *party* to join,
And *Will* to treat *Bob*, like a brother, and friend:
Let 'em make, men in place,
Strive, and pray, to be eas'd;
And thoſe, in diſgrace,
Contented, and pleas'd:
Apollo ſhall be my Lord Treaſurer then,
And the Muſes be married to parliament men.

Pal. Sovereign decider! thou haſt heard the claims;
Pronounce thy wiſh'd decree.
Apol. Nations, 'tis well;
Silent, I lent my ear to every plea,
Impartially attentive: — Now, be dumb;
And hear my general judgment. — *Italy*,
Poſſeſſing wit, in vain, deſerves no more;
Unconſcious of its uſes: — Haughty *Spain*,
Miſled by ſuperſtition, cripples truth,
And fetters thought with the conſtraint of ſtiffneſs:
France is, in age, too dry, and ſour, for wit,
In youth, too light, and wanton: — *Holland* creeps
Too prone, and abject, for the Muſe's wing;
And thinks, too thrivingly, to wiſh the waſte
Of Fancy's loſing livelineſs. — Thou, then,
England's adaptive Genius! temper'd ſoft,
And turn'd, for wit, or folly! friend to both,
And both, by turns, preferring: be thou mine!
Henceforth the Muſes, watchful of thy wiſh,
Shall cultivate good taſte, ſupport true wit;

And

And ſhine in thy productions: --- nor was this
Undue to thy late modeſty, that own'd
A want, while theſe but prided in poſſeſſion.

AIR IX.

While Italy boaſts of her muſic,
And Spain of her ſilver and gold:
While France is of vanity too ſick,
And Holland to traffic is ſold:
Let England be known for her merit,
Her learning, her honour, and wit;
Let her ſcorn a low fame to inherit,
And prize, what is noble, and fit.

Pal. Genius of England, crown'd with due ſucceſs,
Stay, and enjoy thy fortune: --- Get ye hence,
Ye diſappointed rivals; --- re-imbark:
And, unaſpiring to be chiefs in wit,
Purſue more dull diſtinctions.

AIR X.

G. of It. Away, away,
Come away,
I'll not ſtay,
No, no, no:
I will go,
Come away.

AIR XI.

G. of Sp. Since Apollo is ſo rough,
'Tis enough;
Off I blow him with a puff,
And rate him at a pinch of ſnuff;
'Tis enough.

AIR

AIR XII.

G. of Fr. Ha, ha, ha,
This plot ſhall miſcarry;
I can parry:
Sa, ſa, ſa.

AIR XIII.

G. of Hol. Let others follow proud Apollo;
Your Muſe is a jade.
Unacquainted with trade,
And too poor for a Dutchman to follow.
But I'll outwit 'em;
And to fit 'em,
E'en take back my brandy, and leave 'em the herring;
'Tis a ſtock, that they'll want, and I'll keep the transferring.

It. Sp. Fr. Hol.
All Gen. ſucceſſively. —— Oh, -- Oh, -- Oh, -- Oh.

It. Sp. Fr. Hol.
All. Gen. ſucceſſively. —— Woe, -- Woe, -- Woe, -- Woe.
Gen. of Hol. —— —— Give us comfort, O France!
Gen. of Fra. —— —— Come, along, let us dance.

It. Sp. Fr. Hol.
All, in ſucceſſion ——— Oh, -- Oh, -- Oh, -- Oh.

At the entrance upon this laſt line, they form a dance to ſlow, mournful muſic, in heavy, dull ſteps; one ſhaking the body, another the head, a third ſhrugging the ſhoulders, &c. and go out dancing.

Apol. Now, ye pleas'd Muſes! ſmile upon your choice,
And, ſlow-deſcending, with due welcome, greet
Your fav'rite Genius.

The Muſes come, ſeverally, down from the hill, in meaſured motions, ſtepping to the ſound of the inſtruments, in air the

firſt

firſt (with attitudes proper to their characters, in manner of the Grecian dances); they ſalute the Genius of England, as they paſs in the dance, and range themſelves oppoſite, till all are deſcended: Pallas, as they, ſucceſſively paſs, acquainting the Genius with their names, and diſtinctions,

Apol. Firſt of the Muſes, bay-crown'd *Clio*, this!
Gives heroes fame, and teaches praiſe to live:
This is *Euterpe*, with her flow'ry wreath,
Sweet ſoftner of the ſoul. --- *Thalia*, this,
Whoſe temples a broad ivy garland binds,
She, to gay comedy, attunes the mind,
And *laughs* mankind to virtue. --- This, *Melpomene*,
Bright, in her coronet of radiant gems,
That glitter, like her fancy: Tragedy,
And all its ſcepter'd powers, obey this Muſe,
And the ſoul ſhakes before her. —— Eloquence,
And ſweet Perſuaſion, next, in *Polyhimnia*,
Pay England's genius homage; her looſe hair,
Spread, and ſoft flowing, emblem of her words. ——
Next, *Erato*, brings danger in her eye,
Kindler of love's ſweet flame; her every ſtep,
Ten thouſand Cupids, arm'd, attend, unſeen,
And ſhoot their influence round her: from her brow,
Roſes, and myrtles, drink eternal bloom,
To ſhed it, on her votaries. —— *Terpſichore*,
Gay, as her feathery garland, breathes in ſong;
Light, as the airs, which tremble from her tongue!
She ſwells the raptur'd ſoul, to float on ſound,
And melts it into muſic. —— This, *Urania*,
Muſe, moſt belov'd of Heaven! her ſtarry crown
Shines amidſt planets, when ſhe ſails the ſkies,
Detective of the vaſt profound of heaven!
And ſtoops the ſtars, to guide aſtronomy.
Calliope, circling her front with gold,
Is the protector Muſe, who gathers bays,
To ſhade the poet's ſacred brow, from thunder.
--- Ever ador'd be your auſpicious powers,

Immor-

Immortal beauties! whoſe unfading charms
Bloom, for ungraſp'd eternity!
G. of Eng. Oh, ſmile,
Propitious powers of meaning! paſſion's guides!
Ye, who diſturb the mind to mend the heart,
And charm, with gen'rous purpoſe! Ever ſmile;
Ever, thus partial, bleſs your votary's prayer.

AIR XIV.

What are good fortune, diſtinction, and greatneſs,
If wit is but wanting, the reſt to adorn?
No man is happy, whom all his elateneſs,
Untemper'd with reaſon, but liſts into ſcorn:
Wiſdom, alone, can to bliſs recommend us,
High fortunes expoſe, but high virtues defend us.

Apol. Clio! — bright leader of the tuneful train,
Guide the lov'd ſtranger to the ſacred ſpring;
And let his favour'd taſte confeſs its powers.

The Muſes join, here, in a grand dance, after which, Clio gives her hand to the Genius of England, and leads him up the hill; follow'd by all the Muſes, in a repetition of the meaſures, and muſic, abovemention'd. They aſcend in front, and bowing, as they paſs by Apollo, deſcend, out of ſight, on the contrary ſide.

Pal. Now, wou'd high Jove confirm Apollo's choice,
He makes our purpoſe, fate!
Apol. Jove ſhall be ſought:
England has enviers, e'en among the Gods.
Juno is fond of *Spain* for ſhe loves pride,
It recommends her peacocks. --- Love ſmiles, warm,
On amorous *Italy*. --- Vulcan's whole ſhop
Glows red, for *Holland*'s ſervice. Active *France*,
Is dear to Mercury; whoſe ſhadowy wiles,
Thoſe fine drawn ſubtleties, which fools call wit,
Import more danger, to our favourite charge,

Than

Then all the open anger of thoſe powers,
Who, bravely, own their enmity. --- Jove's *Fiat*
Secures us from their practices; for this,
Reſolv'd, I tread, forthwith, the courts of heaven;
Pallas, mean while, will guard the Muſes' hope.

AIR XV.

Swift, attend me, radiant Light,
From the day-ſpring's glowing ſtore,
Dart a beam, effulging bright,
Flaming, half creation o'er!
Then, revolving, ſhoot above,
And bear me to the throne of Jove.

At the cloſe of this air, a ſunbeam ſhoots down, and ſnatches Apollo up, from the mount.

AIR XVI.

Pal. Go, go, --- my good wiſhes attend you,
Keep your fav'rite conſtant, and true;
But, till more than your wiſdom befriend you
I'll forfeit my ſkill, if you do.
Old England is apt to take dudgeon,
And not very clearly to ſee;
She's reſtive, by fits, and won't budge on,
But, like her own wits of South Sea,
Will let go a whale for a gudgeon,
And cry --- what a profit have we!

ZARA:

A

TRAGEDY.

As it is acted at the THEATRES.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

At DRURY-LANE, 1759.

OSMAN, Sultan of *Jeruſalem*,	Mr. MOSSOP.
LUSIGNAN, laſt of the blood of the Chriſtian Kings of *Jeruſalem*,	Mr. GARRICK.
ZARA, SELIMA, Slaves to the Sultan,	Mrs. CIBBER. Mrs. DAVIS.
NERESTAN, CHATILLON, *French* Officers,	Mr. DAVIS. Mr. BLAKES.
ORASMIN, Miniſter to the Sultan,	Mr. BURTON.
MELIDOR, an Officer in the Seraglio,	Mr. SCRACE.

SCENE, the Seraglio, at *Jeruſalem*.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

At COVENT-GARDEN, 1757.

OSMAN, Sultan of *Jeruſalem*,	Mr. BARRY.
LUSIGNAN, laſt of the blood of the Chriſtian Kings of *Jeruſalem*,	Mr. SPARKS.
ZARA, SELIMA, Slaves to the Sultan,	Mrs. CIBBER. Mrs. ELMY.
NERESTAN, CHATILLON, *French* Officers,	Mr. DYER. Mr. USHER.
ORASMIN, Miniſter to the Sultan,	Mr. RIDOUT.
MELIDOR, an Officer in the Seraglio,	Mr. BRANSBY.

TO

TO HIS

ROYAL HIGHNESS,

THE

PRINCE.

SIR,

WRITERS, who mean no *int'reſt*, but their *arts*;
Of *undepending* minds, and *ſtedfaſt* hearts,
Diſclaiming *hopes*, will empty *forms* neglect;
Nor need PERMISSION —— to addreſs *reſpect*.

Frank, as the manly faith of *ancient* time,
Let *truth*, for once, approach the *great*, in *rhime!*
Nor public benefit, miſguided, *ſtray*,
Becauſe a *private wiſher* points its way.

If wond'ring, *here*, your greatneſs condeſcends
To aſk, *What's* HE, *who*, *thus*, *uncall'd*, *attends?*
Smile, at a *ſuitor*, who, in courts, untrac'd,
Pleas'd, if *o'erlook'd*, thus, *owns* his humble *taſte*.

Vow'd an *unenvier* of the buſy *great*;
Too plain for *flatt'ry*; and, too calm for *hate*:

Hid to be *happy*; who ſurveys, *unknown*,
The pow'rleſs *cottage*, and the peaceleſs *throne*,
A ſilent *ſubject* to his *own control:*
Of active *paſſions*, but, unyielding *ſoul*;
Engroſs'd by NO purſuits, *amus'd*, by *all*;
But, *deaf*, as *adders*, to *ambition*'s call:
Too *free*, for *pow'r*, (or *prejudice*) to WIN,
And, *ſafely*, lodging liberty, WITHIN.

Pardon, *Great Prince!* th' unfaſhionable ſtrain,
That ſhuns to *dedicate*; nor ſeeks to *gain:*
That, *(ſelf-reſigning)* knows no *narrow* view;
And, *but* for *public* bleſſings, courts, ev'n YOU!

Late, a bold *tracer* of your *meaſur'd* mind,
(While, by the mournful SCENE, to grief inclin'd)
I ſaw your *eloquence* of *eyes* confeſs
Soft *ſenſe* of BELVIDERA's deep diſtreſs,
Prophetic, thence, *fore-deem'd* the riſing years;
And *hail'd* a HAPPY NATION, in YOUR *tears!*

Oh!——*nobly* touch'd!——th' inſpiring *pleaſure chuſe*,
Snatch, from the *fable wave*, the ſinking MUSE!
Charming, *be* charm'd! the *Stage*'s anguiſh *heal:*
And teach a languid people *how* to *feel.*

Then her full *ſoul*, ſhall TRAGIC *pow'r impart*,
And reach *three kingdoms* in their *Prince's heart!*
Lightneſs, diſclaim'd, ſhall *bluſh* itſelf *away:*
And reas'ning SENSE reſume forgotten ſway:
Love, courage, loyalty, taſte, honour, truth,
Flaſh'd from the *ſcene*, recharm our liſt'ning youth:
And, *virtues*, (by YOUR influence *form'd)* ſuſtain
The future glories of their *founder*'s reign.

Nor, let due care of a *protected Stage*,
Misjudg'd *amuſement*, but *ſpare* hours engage:
Strong, *ſerious* TRUTHS, the manly *Muſe* diſplays;
And leads charm'd *Reaſon* thro' thoſe *flow'ry* ways.

While

While HISTORY's cold care but facts enrolls,
The MUSE (pervasive) saves the pictur'd *souls!*
Beyond all *Egypt's* GUMS, *embalms* mankind:
And stamps the living features of the MIND.

Time can eject the sons of pow'r, from fame;
And *he* who gains a *world*, may LOSE his NAME.
But, *cherish'd arts* insure immortal breath:
And, bid their *prop'd defenders* tread on death!

Look back, lov'd *Prince!* on ages *sunk* in *shade!*
And *feel*, what DARKNESS, absent *Genius* made!
Think, on the *dead fore-fillers* of your *place!*
Think, on the stern *first-founders* of your race!
And, where *lost story* sleeps in silent night;
Charge to their want of *taste*, their want of LIGHT.

When, in your rising grove, (no *converse* nigh)
BLACK EDWARD's aweful *bust* demands your eye,
Think, from *what cause*, blind chronicles DEFAME
The *gross-told* tow'rings, of that *dreadful* name!
Search him, thro' FANCY: and SUPPOSE him, shown
By the *long glories*, to the MUSES known:
Shining, *disclos'd*;—o'ertrampling *Death's* control!
And, *opening*, *backward*, all his depth of *soul!*

Then—breathe a conscious *sigh*, to *mourn* his fate,
Who *form'd* no *writers*, like his spirit, *great!*
To *limn* his living *thoughts*——past fame *renew*;
And build HIM *honours*, they reserve, for YOU!

I am, with profound respect,

SIR,

Your ROYAL HIGHNESS's

most humble

and obedient servant,

A. HILL.

PREFACE
TO THE
READER.

THE beauties of *nature*, will be beauties, *everlastingly*.——If they are ſometimes *eclips'd*, by a cloud of ill accidents, they *diſperſe* the dark *ſcreen*; and, again, become amiable.

But, unwilling to ſuppoſe, we are, *now*, under influence of ſuch a *cloud*, with regard to *dramatical taſte*, I thought it more decent, (and *juſter*) to charge its degeneracy to the STAGE, than to the *Genius* of the nation.

Accounting in this manner for the *defect*, I have often taken pleaſure, (when turning my ſearch towards a *remedy*) to conſider it, as no improbable hope, that YOUNG *Actors* and *Actreſſes*, beginning, *unſeduc'd* by AFFECTED EXAMPLES, might go ſome length, towards what has been ſaid, of a celebrated writer,

" *Who reach'd* Perfection, *in his* firſt Eſſay.

It requir'd, methought, but the aſſiſtance of a lively *imagination*, join'd to an eaſy, and natural, *power*; with a reſolute *habitude*, to BE, for an hour or two, the very perſons, they wou'd *ſeem*.—Such a *foundation* for accompliſh'd acting, lies ſo open, and ſo clearly *in nature*, that they, who find it all, *muſt* diſcover it at *firſt*: becauſe when men are once got *out of the road*, they who travel the *fartheſt*, have but moſt length of way to ride *back* again.

Yet, the intereſted in playhouſes were ſo poſitive, in the contrary ſentiment, that they ſubmitted to reverence, as a *maxim*, this extraordinary conceſſion, " That *actors muſt be twenty years ſuch, before they can expect to be maſters of the air, and tread, of the Stage.*

Now,

Now, there is but *one* view, in nature, wherein I was willing to admit of this argument: I was forced to *confess*, I had seen some *particular* stage airs, and stage treads, which a man of good sense *might* indeed, waste a long life, in endeavouring to imitate, and, *at last, lose his labour!*

However, since an opinion, in opposition to these gentlemen's, wanted weight to make *that* believed *possible*, which had not, yet, been reduced into *practice*, I took a sudden resolution, actually to try, WHO *was in the right*, by attempting the EXPERIMENT.——This, I knew, was a design, which, succeeding, wou'd not fail to give pleasure to the *public*; and, which, *miscarrying*, cou'd produce no worse consequence, than *my* particular mortification.

I imagined it reasonable to found a trial, of this nature, rather on a *new* Play, than an *old* one: and, as it ought to be a play of unquestionable merit, it must have been presumption, and vanity, to have cast a thought toward any thing, *of my own.*——Upon the whole, that I might keep out of reach either of prejudice, or partiality, a *foreign* production seemed the propereſt choice; and, the ZAIRE, of *Monsieur de Voltaire*, offered me every thing that nature could do, on the part of the *Poet:* but, I had still something to *wish*, with regard to that *other* part of her influence, which depended on the *Player.*

I had (of late) among the rest of the town, been deprived of all rational pleasure from the Theatre, by a monstrous, and unmoving *affectation:* which, choking up the avenues to *passion*, had made *Tragedy* FORBIDDING, and HORRIBLE!

I was despairing to see a *correction* of this folly; when I found my self, unexpectedly, re-animated, by the war which the PROMPTER has proclaimed, and is now, weekly, waging, against the *Ranters*, and *Whiners*, of the Theatre; after having undertaken to reduce the *Actor's lost art*, into PRINCIPLES, with design, by reconciling them to the touching, and spirited, *medium*, to reform those *wild copies* of life, into some *resemblance*, at least, of their *originals.*

Thus,

Thus, *confirmed* in my ſentiments, I ventured on the *caſt* of two *capital* characters, into hands, *not diſabled*, by cuſtom, and obſtinate prejudice, from purſuing the *plain track*, *of* NATURE.

It was eaſy to induce OSMAN, (as he is a relation of my own, and *but too fond* of the amuſement) to make trial, *how far* his delight, in an art, I ſhall never allow him to *practiſe*, might enable him to ſupply *one* part of the proof, that, to *imitate nature*, we muſt proceed, *upon natural principles*.

At the ſame time, it happened, that Mrs. CIBBER was, fortunately, inclinable to exert her inimitable talent, in *additional* aid of my purpoſe, with view to *continue* the *practice* of a profeſſion, for which, her *perſon*, her *voice*, the unaffected *ſenſibility* of her *heart*, (and, her *face*, ſo finely diſpos'd, for *aſſuming*, and *expreſſing*, the PASSIONS) have, ſo naturally, qualify'd her.

And, to give this bold *novelty of deſign*, all its neceſſary furtherance, Mr. FLETEWOOD, who profeſſes the moſt generous inclinations, for *improvement* of his troubleſome province, very willingly *concurred*, in whatever could, on *his* part, be of uſe to the *experiment*.

Behold, in this little *detail*, from *what motive* I have taken upon me to throw one of the fineſt of *French* plays upon the public.—If my expectations are not ſtrangely *deceived*, it will be found, by the *event*, whether our taſte *for* true *Tragedy* is *declined*; or, the true *art* of *acting* it *forgotten*.

From the *firſt*, I can have nothing to conclude, but, that my judgment has been *weak*, and *miſtaken*.

But, if the *laſt* proves the caſe, I ſhall flatter my ſelf, that thoſe perſons of quality, from whoſe *imaginary want of diſcernment* ſome people have not *bluſhed* to DERIVE their dull qualities, will, in right of their *inſulted underſtanding*, EXACT, for the future, a warm, and toilſome exertion, of the *ſtrong* and the *natural*, tho' at the COST of the *lazy* and *affected*.

This

This would awaken, at once, the *reflection*, of many, who have it in their POWER to be moving, and natural, actors; and, by effectually *convincing* them, that their preſent opinion is *wrong*, bring 'em over (for their own, and the public advantage) to embrace, and ſucceed by, a *new* one.

Such a ſtep, toward *reforming* the Theatre, would draw on, (as a conſequence) many of its *nobler* improvements. ——For, where *emotions* are keeneſt, the *delight* becomes greateſt; and, to whatever *moſt charms*, we, moſt cloſely, *adhere*; and, encourage it, *moſt actively*.

If, in tranſlating this excellent Tragedy, I have regarded, in ſome places, the *ſoul*, and, in others, the *letter*, of the original *Monſieur de Voltaire*, who has made himſelf a very capable *judge*, both of our *language* and *cuſtoms*, will indulge me that latitude; except he ſhould, in obſerving ſome *alterations* I have made, in his *names*, and his *diction*, forget, that their *motives* are to be found, in the turn of our national *difference*.

After what I have ſaid of the playhouſes, it would be injuſtice, not to *declare*, that I exclude from the cenſure, of ſpeaking, or acting, *unnaturally*, any one of the perſons, who have been caſt into ZARA. ——And, in particular, I muſt ſay *this*, of *two* of them; that Mr. MILWARD, who is already a very *excellent*, and hourly riſing to be an *accompliſhed* actor, has a VOICE, that both comprehends, and expreſſes, *the utmoſt compaſs of* HARMONY. ——And, Mr. CIBBER, diſcerningly, purſued, thro' the numberleſs *extent* of his *walks*, is an actor, of as *unlimited a compaſs of* GENIUS, as ever I ſaw on the ſtage: and, is, *barely*, received, as he *deſerves*, when the town is *moſt favourable*.

PRO-

PROLOGUE.

Written by COLLEY CIBBER, Eſq;

Spoken by Mr. CIBBER.

THE French, *howe'er mercurial they may ſeem,*
Extinguiſh half their fire, by critic phlegm:
While Engliſh *writers Nature's freedom claim,*
And warm their ſcenes with an ungovern'd flame:
'Tis ſtrange that Nature *never ſhould inſpire*
A Racine's *judgment, with a* Shakeſpear's *fire!*

Howe'er, to-night—(to promiſe much we're loth)
But—you've a chance, to have a taſte of both.
From Engliſh *Plays,* Zara's French *author fir'd,*
Confeſs'd his Muſe, beyond herſelf, inſpir'd;
From rack'd Othello's *rage, he rais'd his ſtyle,*
And ſnatch'd the brand, that lights this tragic pile:
Zara's *ſucceſs his utmoſt hopes outflow,*
And a twice twentieth weeping-audience drew.

As for our Engliſh *friend, he leaves to you,*
Whate'er may ſeem to his performance due;
No views of gain, his hopes or fears engage,
He gives *a child of leiſure to the Stage:*
Willing to try, if yet, *forſaken Nature,*
Can charm, with any one remember'd feature.

Thus far, the Author ſpeaks—but now, the Player,
With trembling heart, *prefers his humble prayer.*
To-night the greateſt venture of my life,
Is loſt, or ſav'd, as you *receive—a wife:*
If time, you think, may ripen her, to merit,
With gentle *ſmiles, ſupport her wav'ring ſpirit:*

Zara

Zara *in* France, *at once, an actreſs rais'd,*
Warm'd *into* ſkill, *by being* kindly prais'd:
O! could ſuch wonders here, from favour flow,
How would our Zara's *heart, with tranſport glow!*
But ſhe, alas! by juſter fears oppreſs'd,
Begs but your hare endurance, *at the beſt.*
Her unſkill'd tongue would *ſimple* Nature *ſpeak,*
Nor dares her *bounds, for falſe applauſes break.*
Amidſt a thouſand faults *her beſt pretence*
To pleaſe —— *is unpreſuming innocence.*
When a chaſte heart's diſtreſs your grief *demands,*
One ſilent tear out-weighs a thouſand hands.
If ſhe conveys the pleaſing paſſions, RIGHT,
Guard *and* ſupport *her, this deciſive night.*
If ſhe MISTAKES —— *or, finds her* ſtrength *too* ſmall,
Let interpoſing pity ——— *break her fall.*
In you it reſts, to ſave her, or deſtroy,
If ſhe draws tears from you, I *weep* —— *for* JOY.

EPI-

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Mrs. CLIVE.

HERE, *take a ſurfeit, Sirs, of being* jealous,
And ſhun *the* pains, *that plague thoſe* Turkiſh *fellows:*
Where love *and* death *join hands, their darts* confounding,
Save *us, good Heav'n! from this* new way *of* WOUNDING.!
Curs'd climate!—*where, to* CARDS, *a lone-left woman*
Has only one of her black-guards *to* ſummon!
Sighs, and ſits mope'd, with her tame beaſt *to* gaze at:
And, that cold treat, *is all the* game *ſhe plays at!*
For——*ſhou'd ſhe once, ſome* abler hand *be trying,*
Poignard's *the* word!——*and, the firſt* deal *is*——DYING!
'*Slife, ſhou'd the* bloody whim *get ground, in* Britain,
Where woman's FREEDOM *has ſuch* heights, *to ſit on;*
Daggers, PROVOK'D, *wou'd bring on* DESOLATION:
And, murder'd Belles un-people *half the nation!*——
Fain wou'd I help this Play, to move compaſſion;
And live, to hunt SUSPICION *out of faſhion.*——
FOUR motives, *ſtrongly recommend, to lovers,*
Hate *of this* weakneſs, *that our* ſcene *diſcovers:*
Firſt then——*A woman* WILL, *or* WON'T——*depend on't;*
If ſhe will *do't, ſhe* WILL:—*and,* there's *an end on't.*
But, if ſhe won't,—*ſince ſafe and ſound your* truſt *is,*
Fear is AFFRONT: *and* jealouſy INJUSTICE.
Next—*be who bids his* dear, *do* what ſhe pleaſes,
Blunts wedlock's edge; *and, all its torture* eaſes:
For——not to feel *your ſuff'rings, is the ſame,*
As not to ſuffer:——*All the diff'rence*——*name.*
Thirdly——*The* jealous *huſband wrongs his* honour;
No wife goes lame, *without* ſome hurt *upon her;*
And, the malicious world *will ſtill be* gueſſing,
Who, oft, dines out, *diſlikes her own cook's* dreſſing.
Fourthly, *and* laſtly——*to conclude my lecture,*
If you wou'd FIX *th'* inconſtant wife——RESPECT *her.*
She who perceives her virtues OVER-RATED,
Will fear *to have th' account* more juſtly *ſtated:*
And, borrowing *from her* pride, *the good wife's* SEEMING,
Grow REALLY SUCH——*to* merit *your eſteeming.*

ZARA.

ZARA.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Zara *and* Selima.

Sel. IT moves my wonder, young, and beauteous Zara,
Whence theſe new ſentiments inſpire your heart!
Your peace of mind increaſes with your charms;
Tears, now, no longer ſhade your eyes' ſoft luſtre:
You meditate no more, thoſe happy climes,
To which Nereſtan will return to guide you:
You talk no more of that gay nation, now,
Where men adore their wives, and woman's power
Draws rev'rence from a poliſh'd people's ſoftneſs:
Their huſbands' equals; and their lovers' queens!
Free, without ſcandal; wife, without reſtraint;
Their virtue, due to nature, not to fear!
Why have you ceas'd to wiſh this happy change?
A barr'd ſeraglio!——ſad, unſocial life!
Scorn'd, and a ſlave! All this has loſt its terror:
And Syria rivals, now, the banks of Seine!

Zara. Joys, which we do not know, we do not wiſh;
My fate's bound in, by Sion's ſacred wall;
Clos'd, from my infancy, within this palace,

Cuſtom

Cuſtom has learnt, from *time* the power to *pleaſe* ;
I claim no ſhare in the remoter world,
The Sultan's property, his will my law ;
Unknowing all, but him, his power, his fame ;
To live his ſubject, is my only hope,
All, elſe, an empty dream.——
Sel. Have you forgot
Abſent Nereſtan then ? Whoſe gen'rous friendſhip,
So nobly vow'd redemption from your chains !
How oft have you admir'd his dauntleſs ſoul !
Oſman, his conqu'ror, by his courage, charm'd,
Truſted his faith, and, on his word, releas'd him :
Tho' not return'd, in time——we, yet, expect him,
Nor had his noble journey other motive,
Than to procure our ranſom :——And is this,
This dear, warm, hope——become an idle dream ?
Zara. Since, after two long years, he not returns,
'Tis plain, his promiſe ſtretch'd beyond his power :
A ſtranger, and a ſlave, unknown like him,
Propoſing much, means little ;——Talks, and vows,
Delighted with a proſpect of eſcape :——
He promis'd to redeem ten Chriſtians more,
And free us all, from ſlavery !——I own,
I once admir'd th' unprofitable zeal,
But, now, it charms no longer.——
Sel. What ! if yet,
He, faithful, ſhou'd return, and hold his vow !
Wou'd you not, then——
Zara. No matter——Time is paſt ;
And every thing is chang'd——
Sel. But, whence comes this ?
Zara. Go—'twere too much, to tell thee Zara's fate ;
The Sultan's ſecrets, all are ſacred, here :
But my fond heart delights to mix with thine.——
Some three months paſt, when thou, and other ſlaves,
Were forc'd to quit fair Jordan's flow'ry bank ;
Heaven, to cut ſhort the anguiſh of my days,
Rais'd

Rais'd me, to comfort, by a powerful hand!
This mighty Oſman!
Sel. What of him?
Zara. This Sultan!
This conqu'ror of the Chriſtians! loves——
Sel. Whom?
Zara. Zara!——
Thou bluſheſt, and I gueſs, thy thoughts accuſe me;
But, know me better——'twas unjuſt ſuſpicion:
All Emperor, as he is, I cannot ſtoop
To honours, that bring ſhame and baſeneſs with 'em:
Reaſon, and pride, thoſe props of modeſty,
Sustain my guarded heart, and ſtrengthen virtue;
Rather than ſink to infamy, let *chains*
Embrace me, with a joy; ſuch love denies:
No——I ſhall, now, aſtoniſh thee;——His greatneſs
Submits, to own a pure and honeſt flame;
Among the ſhining crowds, which *live*, to *pleaſe* him,
His whole regard is fix'd on *me*, alone:
He offers marriage—and its rites, now, wait,
To crown me Empreſs of this Eaſtern world.
Sel. Your virtue, and your charms, deſerve it all:
My heart is not ſurpris'd, but ſtruck, to hear it;
If, to be *Empreſs*, can compleat your happineſs,
I rank my ſelf, with joy, among your ſlaves.
Zara. Be, ſtill, my equal—and enjoy my bleſſings:
For, *thou* partaking, they will bleſs *me* more.
Sel. Alas! but Heaven! will it permit this marriage?
Will not this grandeur, ſafely, call'd a bliſs,
Plant bitterneſs, and root it, in your heart?
Have you forgot, you are of Chriſtian blood?
Zara. Ah me! what haſt thou ſaid? Why would'ſt thou thus
Recal my wav'ring thoughts!—How know I, what,
Or whence I am? Heaven kept it, hid, in darkneſs,
Conceal'd me from my ſelf, and from my blood.
Sel. Nereſtan, who was born a Chriſtian, here,
Aſſerts, that you, like him, had Chriſtian parents;

Beſides—*That* croſs, which, from your infant years,
Has been preſerv'd, was found upon your boſom,
As if deſign'd, by Heaven, a pledge of faith,
Due to the God, you purpoſe to forſake!

Zara. Can my fond heart, on ſuch a feeble proof,
Embrace a faith, abhorr'd by him I love?
I ſee, too plainly, cuſtom forms us all;
Our thoughts, our morals, our moſt fix'd belief,
Are conſequences of our place of birth:
Born beyond Ganges, I had been a Pagan:
In France, a Chriſtian;——I am, here, a Saracen:
'Tis but *inſtruction*, all! Our parents' hand
Writes, on our heart, the firſt, faint characters,
Which time, re-tracing, deepens into ſtrength,
That nothing can efface, but Death, or Heaven!——
Thou wert not made a pris'ner in this place,
'Till, after reaſon, borrowing force from years,
Had lent its luſtre, to enlighten faith:———
For me, who in my cradle was their ſlave,
Thy Chriſtian doctrines were, too lately, taught me:
Yet, far from having loſt the rev'rence due,
This croſs, as often as it meets my eye,
Strikes thro' my heart a kind of aweful fear!
I honour, from my ſoul, the Chriſtian laws,
Thoſe laws, which, ſoft'ning nature, by humanity,
Melt nations into brotherhood;——no doubt,
Chriſtians are happy; and, 'tis juſt to love 'em.

Sel. Why have you, then, declar'd yourſelf their foe?
Why will you join your hand, with this proud Oſman's?
Who owes his triumphs to the Chriſtians' ruin!

Zara. Ah!—*Who* could *ſlight* the offer of his heart?
Nay——for I mean to tell thee all my weakneſs
Perhaps, I had, ere now, profeſs'd *thy* faith,
But Oſman *lov'd* me——and I've *loſt* it all:——
I think, on none, but Oſman——my pleas'd heart,
Fill'd with the bleſſing, to be lov'd, by *him*,
Wants room for other happineſs:——Place thou,
Before thy eyes, his merit, and his fame,

His

His youth, yet, blooming but in manhood's dawn!
How many conquer'd Kings have ſwell'd his power!
Think, too, how lovely! how his brow becomes
This wreath of early glories!——Oh! my friend!
I talk not of a ſcepter, which he gives me:
No—to be charm'd with that, were thanks, too humble!
Offenſive tribute, and, too poor, for love!
'Twas Oſman won my heart, not Oſman's crown:
I love not, in him, aught, beſides himſelf.
Thou think'ſt, perhaps, that theſe are ſtarts of paſſion;
But, had the will of Heav'n, leſs bent to bleſs him,
Doom'd Oſman to my chains, and me, to fill
The throne, that Oſman fits on—ruin and wretchedneſs,
Catch and conſume my wiſhes, but I wou'd——
To *raiſe* me, to my *ſelf*, *deſcend* to *him*.

Sel. Hark! the wiſh'd muſic ſounds!---'Tis he——he comes—— [*Exit* Selima.

Zara. My heart prevented him, and found him near:
Abſent, two whole long days, the ſlow-pac'd hour,
At laſt, is come—and gives him to my wiſhes!

Enter Oſman, *reading a paper, which he re-delivers to* Oraſmin.

Oſm. Wait my return——or, ſhou'd there be a cauſe,
That may require my preſence——do not fear
To enter—ever mindful, that my *own* [*Exit* Oraſmin.
Follows my *people's* happineſs.——At length,
Cares have releas'd my heart——to love, and Zara.

Zara. 'Twas not in cruel abſence, to deprive me
Of your imperial image——every where,
You reign, triumphant: memory ſupplies
Reflection, with your pow'r; and you, like Heaven,
Are always preſent——and are always gracious.

Oſm. The Sultans, my great anceſtors, bequeath'd
Their empire to me, but their taſte they gave not;
Their laws, their lives, their loves, delight not me:
I know, our prophet ſmiles on am'rous wiſhes;

And opens a wide field, to vaſt deſire:
I know, that, at my will, I might poſſeſs;
That, waſting tenderneſs, in wild profuſion,
I might look down, to my ſurrounded feet,
And bleſs contending beauties.——I might ſpeak,
Serenely ſlothful, from within my palace,
And bid *my pleaſure* be my *people's law.*
But, ſweet, as ſoftneſs is, its end is cruel;
I can look round, and count a hundred Kings,
Unconquer'd, by themſelves, and ſlaves to others:
Hence was Jeruſalem, to Chriſtians loſt;
But Heaven, to blaſt that unbelieving race,
Taught me to *be* a King, by thinking *like* one.
Hence, from the diſtant Euxine to the Nile,
The trumpet's voice has wak'd the world to war;
Yet, amidſt arms, and death, *thy* power has reach'd me:
For thou diſdain'ſt, like me, a languid love;
Glory, and Zara, join——and charm, together.

Zara. I hear, at once, with bluſhes, and, with joy,
This paſſion, ſo unlike your country's cuſtoms.

Oſm. Paſſion, like mine, diſdains my country's cuſtoms,
The jealouſy, the faintneſs, the diſtruſt,
The proud, ſuperior, coldneſs, of the Eaſt:
I know to love you, Zara, with eſteem;
To truſt your virtue, and to court your ſoul.
Nobly confiding, I unveil my heart,
And dare inform you, that, 'tis all your own:
My *joys* muſt, *all*, be yours——only my *cares*
Shall lie, conceal'd, within——and reach not Zara.

Zara. Oblig'd, by this exceſs of tenderneſs,
How low, how wretched, was the lot of Zara!
Too poor, with aught, but thanks, to pay ſuch bleſſings!

Oſm. Not ſo—I love——and wou'd be lov'd, again;
Let me confeſs it, I poſſeſs a ſoul,
That what it wiſhes, wiſhes, *ardently.*
I ſhou'd believe, you *hated*, had you *power*
To *love*, with *moderation:* 'Tis my aim,
In every thing, to reach ſupreme perfection.

If,

If, with an equal flame, I touch your heart,
Marriage attends your ſmile — but know, 'twill make
Me wretched, if it makes not Zara happy.
Zara. Ah! Sir, if ſuch a heart, as gen'rous Oſman's,
Can, from my will, ſubmit to take its bliſs,
What mortal, ever, was decreed ſo happy!
Pardon the pride, with which I own my joy;
Thus, wholly, to poſſeſs the man, I love!
To know, and to confeſs, his will my fate!
To be the happy work of his dear hands!
To be——

Enter Oraſmin.

Oſm. Already interrupted! What?
Who?—— Whence?
Oraſ. This moment, Sir, there is arriv'd
That Chriſtian ſlave, who, licens'd, on his faith,
Went hence, to France——and, now return'd, prays audience.
Zara. [*Aſide.*] O! Heaven!
Oſm. Admit him—What?—Why comes he not?—
Oraſ. He waits, without.—No Chriſtian dares approach
This place, long ſacred to the Sultan's privacies.
Oſm. Go--bring him with thee--Monarchs, like the ſun,
Shine but in vain, unwarming, if unſeen:
With forms, and rev'rence, let the *great* approach us;
Not the *unhappy*.——Every place, alike,
Gives the diſtreſs'd a privilege to enter.--- [*Exit* Oraſmin.
I think, with horror, on theſe dreadful maxims,
Which harden Kings, inſenſibly, to tyrants.

Re-enter Oraſmin, *with* Nereſtan.

Ner. Imperial Sultan! honour'd, ev'n by foes!
See me, return'd, regardful of my vow,
And, punctual, to diſcharge a Chriſtian's duty:
I bring the ranſom of the captive, Zara,

Fair Selima, the partner of her fortune,
And of ten Chriſtian captives, pris'ners, here.
You promis'd, Sultan, if I ſhou'd return,
To grant their rated liberty:——Behold,
I *am* return'd, and they are yours, no more.
I wou'd have ſtretch'd my purpoſe to *my ſelf*,
But Fortune has deny'd it;———My poor All
Suffic'd, no further; and a noble poverty.
Is, now, my whole poſſeſſion:———I redeem
The promis'd Chriſtians; for I taught 'em hope,
But, for my ſelf, I come, again, your ſlave,
To wait the fuller hand of future charity.

Oſm. Chriſtian! I muſt confeſs, thy *courage* charms me;
But let thy *pride* be taught, it treads too high,
When it preſumes t climb above my mercy.———
Go, ranſomleſs, thy ſelf——and carry back
Their unaccepted ranſoms, join'd with gifts,
Fit to reward thy purpoſe:——Inſtead of ten,
Demand a hundred Chriſtians; they are thine:
Take 'em——and bid 'em teach their haughty country,
They left ſome virtue, among Saracens.——
Be Luſignan, alone, excepted———He,
Who boaſts the blood of Kings, and dares lay claim
To *my* Jeruſalem———that claim his guilt!
Such is the law of States, had *I* been vanquiſh'd,
Thus had *he* ſaid of *me:*———I mourn his lot,
Who muſt, in fetters, loſt to day-light, pine,
And ſigh away old age, in grief, and pain.——
For Zara———but to name her, as a captive,
Were to diſhonour language;———ſhe's a prize,
Above thy purchaſe.———All the Chriſtian realms,
With all their Kings to guide 'em, wou'd unite
In vain, to force her from me.—Go, retire—

Ner. For Zara's ranſom, with her own conſent,
I had your royal word—For Luſignan———
Unhappy, poor, old man—

Oſm. Was I not heard?
Have I not told thee, Chriſtian, all my will?

What,

What, if I prais'd thee!——This preſumptuous virtue,
Compelling my eſteem, provokes my pride:
Be gone——and, when to-morrow's ſun ſhall riſe
On my dominions, be not found——too near me.
[*Exit* Nereſtan.

Zara. [*Aſide.*] Aſſiſt him, Heaven!

Oſm. Zara, retire, a moment——
Aſſume, throughout my palace, ſovereign empire,
While I give orders, to prepare the pomp,
That waits, to crown the miſtreſs of my throne.
[*Leads her out, and returns.*
Oraſmin! didſt thou mark th' imperious ſlave?
What could he mean?——he ſigh'd——and, as he went,
Turn'd, and look'd back at Zara!-- did'ſt thou mark it?

Oraſ. Alas! my ſovereign maſter! let not jealouſy
Strike high enough, to reach your noble heart.

Oſm. Jealouſy, ſaid'ſt thou? I diſdain it:——No.
Diſtruſt is poor, and a miſplac'd ſuſpicion
Invites, and juſtifies, the falſhood fear'd.——
Yet, as I love with warmth——ſo, I *cou'd* hate!
But Zara is above diſguiſe and art:——
My love is ſtronger, nobler, than my power.
Jealous!——I was not jealous——if I was,
I am not—no—my heart—but, let us drown
Remembrance of the word, and of the image:
My heart is fill'd with a diviner flame.——
Go—and prepare for the approaching nuptials;
Zara to *careful empire* joins delight.
I muſt allot one hour to thoughts of ſtate,
Then, all the ſmiling day is love and Zara's.
[*Exit* Oraſmin.
Monarchs, by forms of pompous miſery, preſs'd,
In proud, unſocial miſery, unbleſs'd,
Wou'd, but for love's ſoft influence, curſe their throne,
And, among crowded millions, live, *alone.*

ACT II. SCENE I.

Nereſtan, Chatillon.

Chat. MAtchleſs Nereſtan! generous, and great!
You, who have broke the chains of hopeleſs [ſlaves!
You, Chriſtian Saviour, by a Saviour ſent!
Appear, be known, enjoy your due delight;
The grateful weepers wait to claſp your knees,
They throng, to kiſs the happy hand, that ſav'd 'em:
Indulge the kind impatience of their eyes,
And, at their head, command their hearts, for ever.

Ner Illuſtrious Chatillon,! this praiſe o'erwhelms me;
What have I done, beyond a Chriſtian's duty?
Beyond, what *you* wou'd, in my place, have done?

Chat. True—it is every honeſt Chriſtian's duty;
Nay, 'tis the bleſſing of ſuch minds as ours,
For others' good to ſacrifice our own.——
Yet, happy they, to whom Heav'n grants the power,
To execute, like you, that duty's call!
For us——the relicks of abandon'd war,
Forgot in France, and, in Jeruſalem,
Left, to grow old, in fetters;——Oſman's father
Conſign'd us to the gloom of a damp dungeon,
Where, but for you, we muſt have groan'd out life;
And native France have bleſs'd our eyes no more.

Ner. The will of gracious Heaven, that ſoften'd Oſman,
Inſpir'd me, for your ſakes;———but, with our joy,
Flows, mix'd, a bitter ſadneſs———I had hop'd,
To ſave, from their perverſion, a young beauty,
Who, in her infant innocence, with me,
Was made a ſlave by cruel Noradin;
When, ſprinkling Syria, with the blood of Chriſtians,
Cæſarea's walls ſaw Luſignan, ſurpris'd,
And the proud creſcent riſe, in bloody triumph;

From

From this ſeraglio, having, young, eſcap'd,
Fate, three years ſince, reſtor'd me to my chains;
Then, ſent to Paris, on my plighted faith,
I flatter'd my fond hope, with vain reſolves,
To guide the lovely Zara to that court,
Where Lewis has eſtabliſh'd Virtue's throne;——
But Oſman will detain her——yet, not Oſman;
Zara, herſelf, forgets ſhe is a Chriſtian,
And *loves* the tyrant Sultan!——Let that paſs.
I mourn a diſappointment, ſtill more cruel;
The prop of all our Chriſtian hope is loſt!

Chat. Diſpoſe me at your will.——I am your own.

Ner. Oh, Sir! great Luſignan, ſo long their captive,
That laſt, of an heroic race of Kings!
That warrior! whoſe paſt fame has fill'd the world!
Oſman refuſes, to my ſighs, for ever!

Chat. Nay, then we have been all redeem'd in vain;
Periſh that ſoldier, who would quit his chains,
And leave his noble Chief behind in fetters.
Alas! you know him not, as I have known him;
Thank Heaven, that plac'd your birth ſo far remov'd
From thoſe deteſted days of blood and woe;
But I, leſs happy, was condemn'd to ſee
Thy walls, Jeruſalem, beat down——and all
Our pious fathers' labours loſt, in ruins!
Heav'n! had you ſeen the very temple rifled!
The ſacred ſepulchre, itſelf, profan'd!
Fathers with children, mingled, flame together!
And our laſt King, oppreſs'd with age and arms,
Murder'd——and bleeding, o'er his murder'd ſons!
Then, Luſignan, ſole remnant of his race,
Rallying our fated few, amidſt the flames,
Fearleſs, beneath the cruſh of falling towers,
The conqu'rors and the conquer'd, groans and death!
Dreadful——and, waving in his hand his ſword,
Red with the blood of infidels——cry'd out,
This way, ye faithful Chriſtians! follow *me*——

Ner. How full of glory was that brave retreat!

Chat.

Chat. 'Twas Heav'n, no doubt, that ſav'd, and led him on;
Pointed his path; and march'd our guardian guide:
We reach'd Cæſarea——there, the general voice
Choſe Luſignan, thenceforth, to give us laws;
Alas! 'twas vain——Cæſarea cou'd not ſtand,
When Sion's ſelf was fall'n!——we were betray'd;
And Luſignan condemn'd, to length of life,
In chains, in damps, and darkneſs, and deſpair:
Yet, great, amidſt his miſeries, he look'd,
As if he could not feel his fate, himſelf,
But as it reach'd his followers:——and ſhall we,
For whom our gen'rous Leader ſuffer'd this,
Be, vilely, ſafe? and dare be bleſs'd without him?

Ner. Oh! I ſhou'd hate the liberty, he ſhar'd not:
I knew too well, the miſeries, you deſcribe,
For I was born, amidſt 'em——chains, and death,
Cæſarea loſt, and Saracens triumphant,
Were the firſt objects, which my eyes e'er look'd on.
Hurried, an infant, among other infants,
Snatch'd, from the boſoms of their bleeding mothers,
A temple ſav'd us, till the ſlaughter ceas'd;
Then, were we ſent to this ill-fated city,
Here, in the palace of our former Kings,
To learn, from Saracens, their hated faith,
And be compleatly wretched.——Zara, too,
Shar'd this captivity; we, both, grew up,
So near each other, that a tender friendſhip
Endear'd her to my wiſhes.——My fond heart——
Pardon its weakneſs! bleeds, to ſee her loſt,
And, for a barb'rous, tyrant, quit her God!

Chat. Such is the Saracens', too fatal, policy!
Watchful ſeducers, ſtill, of infant weakneſs:
Happy, that *you*, ſo young, eſcap'd their hands!
But, let us think——may not this Zara's int'reſt,
Loving the Sultan, and, by him belov'd,
For Luſignan procure ſome ſofter ſentence?
The wiſe, and juſt, with innocence, may draw
Their own advantage, from the guilt of others.

Ner.

Ner. How ſhall I gain admiſſion to her preſence?
Oſman has baniſh'd me——but that's a trifle;
Will the ſeraglio's portals open to me?
Or, cou'd I find, *that*, eaſy, to my hopes,
What proſpect of ſucceſs, from an apoſtate?
On whom I cannot look without diſdain;
And who will read her ſhame, upon my brow?
The hardeſt trial of a gen'rous mind,
Is, to court favours, from a hand it ſcorns.

Chat. Think, it is Luſignan, we ſeek to ſerve.

Ner. Well—it ſhall be attempted—Hark! who's this?
Are my eyes falſe? or, is it, really, ſhe?

Enter Zara.

Zara. Start not, my worthy friend! I come to ſeek you;
The Sultan has permitted it; fear nothing:——
But, to confirm my heart, which trembles, near you,
Soften that angry air, nor look reproach;
Why ſhould we fear each other, both, miſtaking?
Aſſociates, from our birth, one priſon held us,
One friendſhip taught affliction, to be calm;
Till Heav'n thought fit to favour your eſcape,
And call you to the fields of happier France;
Thence, once again, it was my lot to find you,
A pris'ner here; where, hid, amongſt a crowd
Of undiſtinguiſh'd ſlaves, with leſs reſtraint,
I ſhar'd your frequent converſe;——
It pleas'd your pity, ſhall I ſay your friendſhip?
Or, rather, ſhall I call it generous charity?
To form that noble purpoſe, to redeem
Diſtreſsful Zara——you procur'd my ranſom,
And, with a greatneſs, that out-ſoar'd a crown,
Return'd, your ſelf a ſlave, to give me freedom!
But Heav'n has caſt our fate, for different climes;
Here, in Jeruſalem, I fix, for ever:
Yet, among all the ſhine, that marks my fortune,
I ſhall, with frequent tears, remember yours;

Your

Your goodneſs will, for ever, ſooth my heart,
And keep your image, ſtill a dweller, there.
Warm'd, by your great example, to protect
That faith, that lifts humanity ſo high,
I'll be a mother to diſtreſsful Chriſtians.

Ner. How!—*You* protect the Chriſtians! *You*, who can
Abjure their ſaving truth!---and, coldly, ſee
Great Luſignan, their Chief, die ſlow in chains?

Zara. To bring him freedom, you behold me here;
You will, this moment, meet his eyes, in joy:

Chat. Shall I, then, live, to bleſs that happy hour?

Ner. Can Chriſtians owe ſo dear a gift to Zara?

Zara. Hopeleſs, I gather'd courage, to intreat
The Sultan, for his liberty——Amaz'd,
So ſoon, to gain the happineſs, I wiſh'd!
See! where they bring the good, old Chief, grown dim,
With age, by pain, and ſorrows, haſten'd on!

Chat. How is my heart diſſolv'd, with ſudden joy!

Zara. I long to view his venerable face,
But tears, I know not why, eclipſe my ſight!
I feel, methinks, redoubled pity for him;
But I, alas! my ſelf, have been a ſlave;
And, when we pity woes, which we have *felt*,
'Tis put a partial virtue!

Ner. Amazement---whence this greatneſs, in an infidel?

Enter Luſignan, *led in by two guards.*

Luſ. Where am I! What forgiving angel's voice
Has call'd me, to reviſit long-loſt day?
Am I with Chriſtians?---I am weak---forgive me,
And guide my trembling ſteps.---I'm full of years,
Yet, *miſery* has worn me more than age.
[*Seating himſelf.*] Am I, in truth at liberty?

Chat. You are;
And every Chriſtian's grief takes end, with yours.

Luſ. O, light!---O! dearer, far, than light! that voice!
Chatillon! is it you?---my fellow martyr!

And

And ſhall our wretchedneſs, indeed, have end?
In what place are we, now?—my feeble eyes,
Diſus'd to day-light, long, in vain, to find you.
Chat. This *was* the palace of your royal fathers,
'Tis, now, the ſon of Noradin's ſeraglio.
Zara. The maſter of this place---the mighty Oſman!
Diſtinguiſhes, and loves to cheriſh, virtue;
This gen'rous Frenchman, yet a ſtranger to you,
Drawn from his native ſoil, from peace, and reſt,
Brought the vow'd ranſoms of ten Chriſtian ſlaves,
Himſelf, contented, to remain a captive:
But Oſman, charm'd by greatneſs, like his own,
To equal, what he lov'd, has giv'n him, *you*.
Luſ. So gen'rous France inſpires her ſocial ſons!
They have been, ever, dear, and uſeful to me!
Wou'd I were nearer to him—Noble Sir!
[Nereſtan *approaches.*
How have I merited, that you, for me,
Shou'd paſs ſuch diſtant ſeas, to bring me bleſſings,
And hazard your own ſafety, for my ſake?
Ner. My name, Sir, is Nereſtan——Born in Syria,
I wore the chains of ſlav'ry, from my birth;
Till, quitting the proud creſcent, for the court,
Where warlike Lewis reigns, beneath his eye,
I learnt the trade of arms;—— the rank, I hold,
Was but the kind diſtinction, which he gave me,
To tempt my courage, to deſerve regard.
Your fight, unhappy Prince, wou'd charm his eye;
That beſt, and greateſt Monarch, will behold,
With grief, and joy, thoſe venerable wounds,
And print embraces, where your fetters bound you:
All Paris will revere the croſs's martyr;
Paris, the refuge, ſtill, of ruin'd Kings!
Luſ. Alas! in times, long paſt, I've *ſeen* its glory:
When Philip, the victorious, liv'd—— I fought,
Abreaſt, with Montmorency, and Melun,
D'Eaſtaing, De Neile, and the far-famous Courcy;——
Names, which were, then, the praiſe, and dread, of war!

But

But what have I to do, at Paris, *now?*
I ſtand upon the brink of the cold grave;
That way, my journey lies——to find, I hope,
The King of *Kings*, and move remembrance, there,
Of all my woes, long-ſuffer'd, for his ſake,——
You, gen'rous witneſſes of my laſt hour,
While I yet live, aſſiſt my humble prayers,
And join the reſignation of my ſoul.
Nereſtan! Chatillon! and you——fair mourner!
Whoſe tears do honour to an old man's ſorrows!
Pity a father, the unhappieſt, ſure!
That ever felt the hand of angry Heaven!
My eyes, tho' dying, ſtill, can furniſh tears:
Half my long life they flow'd, and, ſtill, *will* flow!
A daughter, and three ſons, my heart's proud hopes,
Were, all, torn from me, in their tend'reſt years;
My friend Chatillon knows, and can remember——

Chat. Wou'd I were able, to *forget* your woe.

Luſ. Thou wert a pris'ner, with me in Cæſarea,
And, there, beheld'ſt my wife, and two dear ſons
Periſh, in flames——they did not *need* the grave,
Their foes wou'd have *deny'd* 'em!—I beheld it;
Huſband! and *father!* helpleſs, I beheld it!
Deny'd the mournful privilege, to die!
If ye are ſaints in Heaven, as, ſure! ye are!
Look with an eye of pity, on *that* brother,
That ſiſter, whom you left!——if I have, yet,
Or ſon, or daughter:——for, in early chains,
Far from their loſt, and unaſſiſting father,
I heard, that they were ſent, with numbers more,
To this ſeraglio; hence, to be diſpers'd,
In nameleſs remnants, o'er the Eaſt, and ſpread
Our Chriſtian miſeries, round a faithleſs world.

Chat. 'Twas true——for, in the horrors of that day,
I ſnatch'd your infant daughter, from her cradle;
But, finding ev'ry hope of flight was vain,
Scarce had I ſprinkled, from a public fountain,
Thoſe ſacred drops, which waſh the ſoul from ſin;

When,

When, from my bleeding arms, fierce Saracens
Forc'd the loſt innocent, who, ſmiling, lay,
And pointed, playful, at the ſwarthy ſpoilers!
With her, your youngeſt, then, your *only* ſon,
Whoſe little life had reach'd the fourth, ſad year,
And, juſt giv'n ſenſe, to *feel* his own misfortunes,
Was order'd to this city.

Ner. I, too hither,
Juſt, at that fatal age, from loſt Cæſarea,
Came, in that crowd of undiſtinguiſh'd Chriſtians. ——

Luſ. *You?*---came *you* thence?---Alas! who knows but you
Might, heretofore, have ſeen my two, poor children?
[*Looking up.*] Hah! Madam! that ſmall ornament you wear,
Its form a ſtranger to this country's faſhion,
How long has it been yours?

Zara. From my firſt birth, Sir ———
Ah! what!--you ſeem ſurpris'd!--why ſhould *this* move you?

Luſ. Wou'd you confide it to my trembling hands?

Zara. To what new wonder, am I now reſerv'd?
Oh! Sir, what mean you?

Luſ. Providence! and Heaven!
O, failing eyes! deceive ye not my hope?
Can this be poſſible?—Yes, yes—'tis ſhe!
This little croſs—I know it, by ſure marks;
Oh! take me, Heav'n! while I can die with joy—

Zara. O! do not, Sir, diſtract me!—riſing thoughts,
And hopes, and fears, o'erwhelm me!

Luſ. Tell me, yet,
Has it remain'd, for ever, in your hands?
What!—both brought captives, from Cæſarea, hither?

Zara. Both, both ———

Ner. Oh, Heaven! have I then found a father?

Luſ. Their voice! their looks!
The living images of their dear mother!
O, thou! who, thus, canſt bleſs my life's laſt ſand!
Strengthen my heart, too feeble for this joy.
Madam! Nereſtan!------Help me, Chatillon! [*Riſing.*
Nereſtan! if thou ought'ſt to own that name,

Shines

Shines there, upon thy noble breaſt, a noble ſcar,
Which, ere Cæſarea fell, from a fierce hand,
Surpriſing us, by night, my child receiv'd?
Ner. Bleſs'd hand!——I *bear* it, Sir—the mark is there!
Luſ. Merciful Heaven!
Ner. [*kneeling*] O, Sir!---O, Zara, kneel.
Zara. [*kneeling.*] My father!------Oh!
Luſ. O, my loſt children!
Both. Oh!———
Luſ. My ſon! my daughter! loſt, in embracing you,
I wou'd, now, *die*, leſt this ſhould prove a dream.
Chat. How touch'd is my glad heart, to ſee their joy!
Luſ. Again, I find you——dear, in *wretchedneſs*:
O, my brave ſon---and, thou, my nameleſs daughter!
Now, diſſipate all doubt, remove all dread:
Has Heaven, that gives me back my children---giv'n 'em
Such, as I loſt 'em?---come they, Chriſtians, to me?---
One weeps---and one declines a conſcious eye!
Your ſilence ſpeaks --too well I underſtand it.
Zara. I cannot, Sir, deceive you——Oſman's laws
Were mine---and Oſman is *not* Chriſtian.---
Luſ. Oh! my miſguided child!---at that ſad word,
The little life, yet mine, had left me, quite,
But that my death might fix thee, loſt, for ever.
Full ſixty years, I fought the Chriſtians' cauſe,
Saw their doom'd temple fall, their power deſtroy'd:
Twenty a captive, in a dungeon's depth,
Yet, never, for my ſelf my tears ſought Heaven;
All, for my children, roſe my fruitleſs prayers:
Yet, what avails a father's wretched joy?
I have a daughter gain'd, and *Heav'n* an enemy.
But 'tis *my* guilt, not hers — thy father's *priſon*
Depriv'd thee of thy faith —— yet, do not loſe it:
Reclaim thy birthright —— think upon the blood
Of twenty Chriſtian Kings, that fills thy veins;
'Tis heroes' blood—— the blood of ſaints and martyrs!
What wou'd thy *mother* feel, to ſee thee, thus?
She, and thy murder'd *brothers?*——think, they call thee;
Think,

Think, that thou ſee'ſt 'em ſtretch their bloody arms,
And weep, to win thee, from their murderers' boſom.
Ev'n in the place, where thou *betray'ſt* thy God,
He *dy'd*, my child, to ſave thee.—Turn thy eyes,
And ſee; for thou art *near*, his ſacred ſepulchre;
Thou can'ſt not move a ſtep, but where he *trod!*
Thou trembleſt—Oh! admit me to thy *ſoul*;
Kill not thy aged, thy afflicted father;
Take not, thus ſoon, again, the life thou gav'ſt him;
Shame not thy mother—nor betray thy God.—
'Tis paſt—repentance dawns, in thy ſweet eyes;
I ſee bright Truth, deſcending to thy heart,
And, now, my long-loſt child, is found, for ever.

Ner. O! doubly bleſs'd! a ſiſter, and a ſoul,
To be redeem'd together!

Zara. O! my father!
Dear author of my life! inform me, teach me,
What ſhou'd my duty do?

Luſ. By one ſhort word,
To dry up all my tears, and make life welcome,
Say, thou art Chriſtian.

Zara. Sir——I *am* a Chriſtian.

Luſ. Receive her, gracious Heaven! and bleſs her, for it.

Enter Oraſmin.

Oraſ. Madam, the Sultan order'd me, to tell you,
That he expects, you, inſtant, quit this place,
And bid your laſt farewel to theſe vile Chriſtians:
You, captive Frenchmen,——follow *me*; for you,
It is my taſk, to anſwer.——

Chat. Still, new miſeries!
How cautious man ſhou'd be, to ſay, I'm happy!

Luſ. Theſe are the times, when men of virtue, prove,
That, 'tis the mind, not blood, inſures their firmneſs.

Zara. Alas! Sir——Oh!——

Luſ. Oh, you!——I dare not name you:
Farewel——but, come what may, beſure, remember,
You keep the fatal ſecret!——for the reſt,
Leave all to Heaven,——be faithful, and be bleſt.

ACT III. SCENE I.

Oſman, and *Oraſmin*.

Oſm. ORaſmin! this alarm was falſe, and groundleſs;
Lewis, no longer turns his arms, on *me*:
The French, grown weary, by a length of woes,
Wiſh not, at once, to quit their fruitful plains,
And famiſh, on Arabia's deſart ſands.
Their ſhips, 'tis true, have ſpread the Syrian ſeas;
And Lewis, hovering o'er the coaſt of Cyprus,
Alarms the fears of Aſia;——but, I've learnt,
That, ſteering wide, from our unmenac'd ports,
He points his thunder at th' Egyptian ſhore.
There, let him war, and waſte *my* enemies;
Their mutual conflict will but fix my throne.——
Releaſe thoſe Chriſtians——I reſtore their freedom;
'Twill pleaſe their maſter, nor can weaken *me*:
'Tranſport 'em, at my coaſt, to find their King;
I wiſh, to have him *know* me: carry thither,
This Luſignan, whom, tell him, I reſtore,
Becauſe I cannot fear his fame in arms;
But love him, for his virtue, and his blood.
Tell him, my father having conquer'd, twice,
Condemn'd him to perpetual chains; but I
Have ſet him *free*, that I might triumph, *more*.

Oraſ. The Chriſtians gain an army, in *his name*.

Oſm. I cannot fear a *ſound*——

Oraſ. But, Sir——ſhou'd Lewis——

Oſm. Tell Lewis, and the *world*——it *ſhall* be ſo:
Zara propos'd it, and my heart approves:
Thy ſtateſman's reaſon is too dull, for love!
Why wilt thou force me, to confeſs it all?
Tho' I, to Lewis ſend back Luſignan,
I give him but to Zara——I have griev'd her;

And,

And ow'd her the atonement of this joy.
Thy falſe advices, which, but now, miſled
My anger, to confine thoſe helpleſs Chriſtians,
Gave her a pain, I feel, for her, and me:
But I talk on, and waſte the ſmiling moments.
For one long hour, I yet, defer my nuptials;
But, 'tis not *loſt*, that hour! 'twill all be hers!
She wou'd employ it, in a conference,
With that Nereſtan, whom thou know'ſt---that Chriſtian!
Oraſ. And have you, Sir, indulg'd that ſtrange deſire?
Oſm. What mean'ſt thou? they were infant ſlaves, together;
Friends ſhould *part*, *kind*, who are to meet no more;
When Zara aſks, I will refuſe her nothing.
Reſtraint was never made for thoſe, we love;
Down, with theſe rigours, of the proud ſeraglio;
I hate its laws——where blind auſterity
Sinks virtue to neceſſity.——My blood
Diſclaims your Aſian jealouſy;——I hold
The fierce, free, plainneſs, of my Scythian anceſtors,
Their open confidence, their honeſt hate,
Their love, unfearing, and their anger, told.
Go---the good Chriſtian waits---conduct him to her;
Zara expects thee---what ſhe wills, obey. [*Exit* Oſmin.
Oraſ. Ho! Chriſtian! enter——wait, a moment, here;

Enter Nereſtan.

Zara, will ſoon, approach---I go, to find her [*Exit* Oraſmin.
Ner. In what a ſtate, in what a place, I leave her!
O, faith! O, father! O! my poor, loſt ſiſter!
She's here!——

Enter Zara.

Thank Heaven, it is not, then, unlawful,
To ſee you, yet, once more, my lovely ſiſter!
Not *all* ſo happy!——We, who met, but now,
Shall never meet *again*——for Luſignan——
We ſhall be orphans, ſtill, and want a father.

Zara. Forbid it, Heaven!

Ner. His laſt, ſad hour's at hand. ——
That flow of joy, which follow'd our diſcovery,
Too ſtrong, and ſudden, for his age's weakneſs,
Waſting his ſpirits, dry'd the ſource of life,
And Nature yields him up to Time's demand:
Shall he not die, in peace?——Oh! let no doubt
Diſturb his parting moments, with diſtruſt;
Let me, when I return, to cloſe his eyes,
Compoſe his *mind's* impatience, too, and tell him,
Your are confirm'd a Chriſtian.——

Zara. Oh! may his ſoul enjoy, in earth, and heaven,
Eternal reſt! nor let one thought, one ſigh,
One bold complaint, of *mine*, recall his cares!
But, *you* have injur'd me, who, ſtill, can *doubt*.——
What! am I not your ſiſter? and ſhall *you*
Refuſe me credit? *you* ſuppoſe me light?
You, who ſhou'd judge *my* honour, by your own!
Shall *you* diſtruſt a truth, I dar'd avow,
And ſtamp apoſtate, on a ſiſter's heart!

Ner. Ah! do not miſconceive me!——if I err'd,
Affection, not diſtruſt, miſled my fear;
Your *will* may be a Chriſtian, yet *not* you:
There is a ſacred *mark*——a *ſign* of faith,
A pledge, of promiſe, that muſt firm your claim;
Waſh you from guilt, and open heaven, before you.
Swear, ſwear, by all the woes, we all have borne,
By all the martyr'd ſaints, who call you daughter;
That you conſent, this day, to ſeal our faith,
By that myſterious rite, which waits your call.

Zara. I ſwear, by heaven, and all it's holy hoſt,
Its ſaints, its martyrs, its atteſting angels,
And the dread preſence of its living Author,
To have no faith, but yours;—to die, a Chriſtian!
Now, tell me, what this myſtic faith requires?

Ner. To hate the happineſs of Oſman's throne,
And love that God, who, thro' this maze of woes,
Has brought us all, unhoping, thus, together;

For

For me ——— I am a ſoldier, uninſtructed,
Nor daring to inſtruct, tho' ſtrong in faith:
But I will bring th' ambaſſador of Heaven,
To clear your views, and lift you to your God:
Be it your taſk, to gain admiſſion for him. ———
But where? from whom?---Oh! thou Immortal Power!
Whence can we hope it, in this curs'd ſeraglio?
Who *is* this ſlave of Oſman? ———yes, this ſlave!
Does ſhe not boaſt the blood of twenty Kings?
Is not her race the ſame, with that, of Lewis?
Is ſhe not Luſignan's unhappy daughter?
A Chriſtian? and my ſiſter? ——— yet, a ſlave!
A *willing* ſlave! ——— I dare not ſpeak, more plainly.

Zara. Cruel! go on ——— Alas! you know not *me!*
At once, a ſtranger, to my ſecret fate,
My pains, my fears, my wiſhes, and my power:
I am ——— I will be, Chriſtian ——— will receive
This holy prieſt, with his myſterious bleſſing;
I will not do, nor ſuffer, aught, unworthy
My ſelf, my father, or my father's race. ———
But, tell me ——— nor be tender, on this point;
What puniſhment your Chriſtian laws decree,
For an unhappy wretch, who, to herſelf,
Unknown, and, all abandon'd, by the world,
Loſt, and enſlav'd, has, in her Sovereign maſter,
Found a protector, generous, as great,
Has touch'd *his* heart, and giv'n him, all her own?

Ner. The puniſhment of ſuch a ſlave, *ſhou'd* be
Death, in *this* world ——— and pain, in *that* to come.

Zara. I am that ſlave---ſtrike here---and ſave my ſhame:

Ner. Deſtruction to my hopes! ——— can it be you?

Zara. It is ———ador'd by Oſman, I adore him:
This hour, the nuptial rites will make us, *one.*

Ner. What! marry Oſman!---Let the world grow dark,
That the extinguiſh'd ſun may hide thy ſhame!
Cou'd it be thus, it were no crime to kill thee.

Zara. Strike, ſtrike----I love him----yes, by Heav'n! I love him.

Ner. Death is thy due——but not thy due from *me*;
Yet, were the honour of our houſe no bar——
My father's fame, and the too gentle laws
Of that religion, which thou haſt diſgrac'd——
Did not the God, thou quit'ſt, hold back my arm,
Not there——I cou'd not, there;——but, by my ſoul,
I wou'd ruſh deſp'rate, to the Sultan's breaſt,
And plunge my ſword in his proud heart who damns thee,
Oh! ſhame! ſhame! ſhame! at ſuch a time, as this!
When Lewis, that awak'ner of the world,
Beneath the lifted croſs, makes Egypt pale,
And draws the ſword of Heaven, to ſpread our faith!
Now, to ſubmit to ſee my ſiſter, doom'd
A boſom ſlave, to him, whoſe tyrant heart
But meaſures glory, by the Chriſtians' woe!
Yes——I will dare acquaint our father with it;
Departing Luſignan may live, ſo long,
As juſt, to hear, thy ſhame, and die to 'ſcape it.

Zara. Stay----my too angry brother,---ſtay---perhaps,
Zara has reſolution, great, as thine:
'Tis cruel——and unkind!——Thy *words* are *crimes*;
My weakneſs but *misfortune!* Doſt thou ſuffer?
I ſuffer more;——Oh! wou'd to Heaven, this blood
Of twenty boaſted kings, would ſtop, at once,
And ſtagnate in my heart!——it, then, no more,
Wou'd ruſh, in boiling fevers, thro' my veins,
And every trembling drop, be fill'd with Oſman.
How has he *lov'd* me! how has he *oblig'd* me!
I owe *thee* to him! what has he *not* done,
To juſtify his boundleſs pow'r of charming!
For *me*, he ſoftens the ſevere decrees
Of his own faith;——and is it juſt, that *mine*
Shou'd bid me hate him, but becauſe he loves me?
No——I will be a Chriſtian——but, preſerve
My gratitude, as ſacred, as my faith:
If I have death to fear, for Oſman's ſake,
It muſt be from his *coldneſs*, not his *love*.

Ner. I muſt at once, condemn, and pity thee;

I cannot

I cannot point thee out, which way to go,
But Providence will lend its light, to guide thee.
That ſacred rite, which thou ſhalt, now, receive,
Will ſtrengthen, and ſupport, thy feeble heart,
To live, an innocent; or die, a martyr:
Here, then, begin performance of thy vow;
Here, in the trembing horrors of thy ſoul,
Promiſe thy King, thy father, and thy God,
Not to accompliſh theſe deteſted nuptials,
'Till, firſt, the reverend prieſt has clear'd your eyes,
Taught you to know, and giv'n you claim to Heaven.
Promiſe me this———

Zara. So bleſs me, Heaven! I do.———
Go——haſten the good prieſt, I will expect him;
But, firſt, return——chear my expiring father,
Tell him, I am, and will be, all he wiſhes me:
Tell him, to give him life, 'twere joy, to die.

Ner. I go—farewell———farewell, unhappy ſiſter!
[*Exit* Nereſtan.

Zara. I am alone———and now be juſt, my heart!
And tell me, wilt thou dare betray thy God!
What am I? what am I about to be?
Daughter of Luſignan?———or wife to Oſman?
Am I a lover, moſt? or, moſt, a Chriſtian?
Wou'd Selima were come! and yet, 'tis juſt,
All friends ſhou'd fly her, who forſakes herſelf:
What ſhall I do?— What heart has ſtrength, to bear
Theſe double weights of duty?—Help me, Heaven!
To thy hard laws I render up my ſoul:
But, Oh! demand it back—for, now, 'tis Oſman's.—

Enter Oſman.

Oſm. Shine out, appear, be found, my lovely Zara!
Impatient eyes attend———the rites expect thee;
And my devoted heart, no longer, brooks
This diſtance from its ſoft'ner!——all the lamps
Of nuptial love are lighted, and burn pure,

As if they drew their brightneſs from thy bluſhes:
The holy moſque is fill'd with fragrant fumes,
Which emulate the ſweetneſs of thy breathing:
My proſtrate people, all, confirm my choice,
And ſend their ſouls to Heaven, in prayer, for bleſſings.
Thy envious *rivals*, conſcious of thy right,
Approve ſuperior charms, and join to praiſe thee;
The throne, that waits thee, ſeems to ſhine, more richly,
As all its gems, with animated luſtre,
Fear'd to look dim, beneath the eyes of Zara!
Come, my ſlow love! the ceremonies wait thee;
Come, and begin, from this dear hour, my triumph.

Zara. Oh! what a wretch am I? O, grief! Oh, love!

Oſm. Come —— come ——

Zara. Where ſhall I hide my bluſhes?

Oſm. Bluſhes? —— here in my boſom, hide 'em.

Zara. My Lord?

Oſm. Nay, Zara—give me thy hand, and come——

Zara. Inſtruct me, Heaven!
What I ſhou'd ſay —— Alas! I cannot ſpeak.

Oſm. Away —— this modeſt, ſweet, reluctant, trifling,
But doubles my deſires, and thy own beauties!

Zara. Ah, me!

Oſm. Nay---but thou ſhould'ſt not be *too* cruel---

Zara. I can no longer, bear it —— Oh! my Lord---

Oſm. Ha!-------what!-------whence? how?-----

Zara My Lord! my Sovereign!
Heaven knows, this marriage wou'd have been a bliſs,
Above my humble hopes!—yet, witneſs, love!
Not from the grandeur of your throne, that bliſs,
But, from the pride of calling Oſman, mine.
Wou'd you had been no Emperor! and I,
Poſſeſs'd of power, and charms, deſerving *you!*
That, ſlighting Aſia's thrones, I might, alone,
Have left a proffer'd world, to follow *you*,
Through deſarts, uninhabited by men,
And bleſs'd, with ample room, for peace, and love:
But, as it *is* —— theſe Chriſtians ——

Oſm.

Oſm. Chriſtians! what!
How ſtart two images into thy thoughts,
So diſtant ——— as the Chriſtians, and *my* love!
Zara. That good, old Chriſtian, reverend Luſignan,
Now, dying, ends his life, and woes, together!
Oſm. Well! let him die ——what has thy heart to feel,
Thus preſſing, and thus tender, from the death
Of an old, wretched, Chriſtian?—Thank our prophet,
Thou art no Chriſtian!———Educated, here,
Thy happy youth was taught our better faith:
Sweet, as thy pity ſhines, 'tis, now, miſ-tim'd;
What! tho' an aged ſuff'rer dies, unhappy,
Why ſhou'd his foreign fate diſturb our joys?
Zara. Sir, if you love me, and wou'd have me think,
That I am truly dear———
Oſm. Heaven! *if* I love———
Zara. Permit me--------
Oſm. What?
Zara. To deſire--------
Oſm. Speak out———
Zara. The nuptial rites
May be deferr'd, till--------
Oſm. What?——is that the voice
Of Zara?
Zara. Oh! I cannot bear his frown!
Oſm. Of Zara!
Zara. It is dreadful to my heart,
To give you but a ſeeming cauſe, for anger;
Pardon my grief—alas! I cannot bear it;
There is a painful terror, in your eye,
That pierces to my ſoul--------Hid, from your ſight,
I go, to make a moment's truce, with tears,
And gather force, to ſpeak of my deſpair [*Exit diſordered.*
Oſm. I ſtand, immoveable, like ſenſeleſs marble!
Horror had frozen my ſuſpended tongue:
And an aſtoniſh'd ſilence robb'd my will
Of power, to tell her, that ſhe ſhock'd my ſoul!
Spoke ſhe to *me?*------ſure! I miſunderſtood her?
Cou'd it be *me*, ſhe left?------What have I ſeen?

Enter Oraſmin.

Oraſmin! what a change is here!—ſhe's gone,
And I permitted it, I know not how!

Oraſ. Perhaps, you but accuſe the charming fault
Of innocence, too modeſt, oft, in love.

Oſm. But why, and whence, thoſe tears?---thoſe looks!
that flight!
That grief! ſo ſtrongly ſtamp'd on every feature!
If it has been that Frenchman!——what a thought!
How low, how horrid, a ſuſpicion, that!
The dreadful flaſh, at once, gives light, and kills me:
My too bold confidence repell'd my caution;
An infidel!—a ſlave!—a heart, like mine,
Reduc'd, to ſuffer, from ſo *vile* a rival!
But, tell me, did'ſt thou mark 'em at their parting?
Didſt thou obſerve the language of their eyes?
Hide nothing from me——Is my love betray'd?
Tell me my whole diſgrace: nay, if thou trembleſt,
I hear thy pity ſpeak, tho' thou art ſilent.

Oraſ. I tremble, at the pangs, I ſee you ſuffer;
Let not your angry apprehenſion urge
Your faithful ſlave, to irritate your anguiſh;
I did, 'tis true, obſerve ſome parting tears;
But, there are tears, of *charity* and *grief:*
I cannot think, there was a cauſe, deſerving
This agony of paſſion ———

Oſm. Why no——I thank thee------
Oraſmin, thou art wiſe! it cou'd not be,
That I ſhou'd ſtand, expos'd, to ſuch an inſult:
Thou know'ſt, had Zara meant me the offence,
She wants not wiſdom, to have *bid* it, better;
How rightly did'ſt thou judge!---Zara ſhall know it:
And thank thy honeſt ſervice---After all,
Might ſhe not have ſome cauſe for tears, which I
Claim no concern in---but the grief it gives her?
What an unlikely fear------from a poor ſlave!
Who goes, to-morrow, and, no doubt, who wiſhes,
Nay, who reſolves, to ſee theſe climes no more!

Oraſ.

Oraſ. Why did you, Sir, againſt our country's cuſtom,
Indulge him, with a ſecond leave to come?
He ſaid, he ſhould return, once more, to ſee her.
Oſm. Return!---the traitor! he return!---Dares he
Preſume, to preſs a ſecond interview?
Wou'd he be ſeen again?------He ſhall be ſeen;
But, dead;------I'll puniſh the audacious ſlave,
To teach the faithleſs fair, to feel my anger:
Be *ſtill*, my tranſports; violence is blind:
I know, my heart, at once, is fierce, and weak;
I feel, that I deſcend, below my ſelf;
Zara can never, juſtly, be ſuſpected;
Her ſweetneſs was not form'd to cover treaſon:
Yet, Oſman muſt not ſtoop to woman's follies.
Their tears, complaints, regrets, and reconcilements,
With all their light, capricious, roll of changes,
Are arts, too vulgar, to be try'd on *me*.
It wou'd become me, better, to reſume
The empire of my will;----Rather than fall
Beneath my ſelf, I muſt, how dear ſoe'er
It coſts me, *riſe*------till I look down, on Zara!
Away---but mark me---theſe ſeraglio doors,
Againſt all Chriſtians, be they, henceforth, ſhut,
Cloſe, as the dark retreats of ſilent death.—
What have I done, juſt Heav'n! thy rage to move,
That thou ſhou'dſt ſink me down, ſo low, to love?

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Zara, Selima.

Sel. AH! Madam, how, at once, I grieve your fate,
And, how admire your virtue!--Heaven permits,
And Heaven will give you ſtrength, to bear misfortune;
To break theſe chains, ſo ſtrong, and yet, ſo dear.
Zara. Oh! that I cou'd ſupport the fatal ſtruggle!

Sel.

Sel. Th' Eternal aids your weakneſs, ſees your will;
Directs your purpoſe, and rewards your ſorrows.
Zara. Never had wretch more cauſe, to *hope*, he does.
Sel. What! tho' you, here, no more, behold your father
There is a Father to be found above,
Who can reſtore that father to his daughter.
Zara. But, I have planted pain, in Oſman's boſom;
He loves me, ev'n to death! — and I reward him,
With anguiſh and deſpair; — How baſe! how cruel!
But I deſerv'd him not, I ſhou'd have been
Too happy, and the hand of Heaven repell'd me.
Sel. What! will you, then, regret the glorious loſs,
And hazard, thus, a vict'ry, bravely won?
Zara. Inhuman victory! — thou doſt not know,
This love, ſo pow'rful, this ſole joy of life,
This firſt, beſt hope of earthly happineſs,
Is, yet, leſs pow'rful, in my heart, than Heaven;
To him, who made that heart, I offer it;
There, there, I ſacrifice my bleeding paſſion:
I pour, before him, ev'ry guilty tear,
I beg him, to efface the fond impreſſion,
And fill, with his own image, all my ſoul;
But, while I weep, and ſigh, repent, and pray,
Remembrance brings the object of my love,
And ev'ry light illuſion floats before him.
I ſee, I hear him, and again, he charms!
Fills my glad ſoul, and ſhines, 'twixt me, and Heav'n!
Oh! all ye royal anceſtors! Oh, father!
Mother! you Chriſtians, and the Chriſtians' God!
You, who deprive me of this gen'rous lover!
If you permit me not to live for him,
Let me not live, at all, and I am bleſs'd:
Let me die, innocent; let his dear hand
Cloſe the ſad eyes of her, he ſtoop'd to love,
And I acquit my fate, and aſk no more.
But he forgives me not----regardleſs, now,
Whether, or how, I live, or, when I die,
He quits me, ſcorns me — and I, yet live on,

And

And talk of death, as diſtant.———
Sel. Ah! deſpair not,
Truſt your eternal helper, and be happy.
Zara. Why——what has Oſman done, that *he*, too,
ſhou'd not?
Has Heaven, ſo nobly, form'd his heart, to *hate* it?
Gen'rous, and juſt, beneficent, and brave,
Were he but Chriſtian——what can man be *more?*
I wiſh, methinks, this reverend prieſt were come;
To free me from theſe doubts, which ſhake my ſoul:
Yet, know not, why I ſhou'd not dare to hope,
That Heaven, whoſe mercy all confeſs, and feel,
Will pardon, and approve, th' alliance wiſh'd:
Perhaps, it ſeats me on the throne of Syria,
To tax my pow'r, for theſe good Chriſtians' comfort.
Thou know'ſt, the mighty Saladine, who, firſt,
Conquer'd this empire, from my father's race,
Who, like my Oſman, charm'd th' admiring world,
Drew birth, tho' Syrian, from a Chriſtian mother.
Sel. What mean you, Madam! Ah! you do not ſee!—
Zara. Yes, yes——I ſee it all; I am not blind:
I ſee, my country, and my race, condemn me;
I ſee, that, ſpite of all, I ſtill love Oſman.——
What! if I, now, go throw me at his feet,
And tell him, there, ſincerely, what I am?
Sel. Conſider—*That* might coſt your brother's life,
Expoſe the Chriſtians, and betray you all.
Zara. You do not know the noble heart of Oſman.
Sel. I know him the protector of a faith,
Sworn enemy to ours.----The *more* he loves,
The *leſs* will he permit you, to profeſs
Opinions, which he hates. To-night, the prieſt,
In private, introduc'd, attends you, here;
You promis'd him admiſſion----
Zara. Wou'd I had not!
I promis'd, too, to keep this fatal ſecret;
My father's urg'd command requir'd it, twice;
I muſt obey, all dangerous, as it is:

Compell'd

Compell'd to silence, Osman is enrag'd;
Suspicion follows, and I lose his love.

Enter Osman.

Osm. Madam! there was a time, when my charm'd hea
Made it a virtue, to be lost, in love;
When, without blushing, I indulg'd my flame;
And ev'ry day, still, made you dearer to me.
You taught me, Madam, to believe, my love
Rewarded, and return'd —— nor was that hope,
Methinks, too bold for reason: Emperors,
Who chuse to sigh, devoted, at the feet
Of beauties, whom the world conceive their slaves,
Have fortune's claim, at least, to sure success:
But, 'twere profane to think of pow'r, in love.
Dear, as my passion makes you, I decline
Possession of her charms, whose heart's another's;
You will not find me a weak, jealous, lover,
By coarse reproaches giving pain to you,
And shaming my own greatness —— wounded deeply,
Yet shunning, and disdaining, low complaint,
I come —— to tell you ——

Zara. Give my trembling heart
A moment's respite ——

Osm. That unwilling coldness,
Is the just prize of your capricious lightness;
Your ready arts may spare the fruitless pains,
Of colouring deceit with fair pretences;
I wou'd not wish to hear your slight excuses;
I cherish ignorance, to save my blushes.
Osman, in ev'ry trial, shall remember,
That he is Emperor —— Whate'er I suffer,
'Tis due to honour, that I give up you,
And, to my injur'd bosom, take despair,
Rather than, shamefully possess you, sighing,
Convinc'd, those sighs were, never, meant for me.—
Go, Madam—you are free—From Osman's pow'r.

Expect

Expect no wrongs, but see his face no more.

Zara. At last, 'tis come—the fear'd, the murd'ring moment
Is come—and I am curs'd by earth and heaven!
[*Throws herself on the ground.*
If it is true, that I am lov'd no more;——
If you——

Osm. It is too true, my *fame* requires it;
It is too true, that I, unwilling, leave you:
That I, at once, renounce you, and adore.—
Zara!—you weep!—

Zara. If I am doom'd to lose you,
If I must wander o'er an empty world,
Unloving, and unlov'd—Oh! yet, do justice
To the afflicted——do not wrong me doubly:
Punish me, if 'tis needful to your peace,
But say not, I deserv'd it——This, at least,
Believe——for, not the greatness of your soul
Is truth, more pure, and sacred——no regret
Can touch my bleeding heart, for having lost
The rank, of her, you raise to share your throne;
I know, I never ought to have been there;
My fate, and my defects require, I lose you:
But ah! my heart was, never, known to Osman.
May Heaven, that punishes, for ever hate me,
If I regret the loss of aught, but *you*.

Osm. Rise—rise—this means not love. [*Raises her.*

Zara. Strike—strike me, Heaven!

Osm. What! is it love, to force yourself to wound
The heart you wish to gladden?—But I find,
Lovers, least know *themselves*, for, I believ'd,
That I had taken back the power I gave you;
Yet, see!—you did but weep, and have resum'd me!
Proud, as I am—I must confess, one wish
Evades my power—the blessing to forget you.
Zara——thy tears are form'd to teach disdain,
That softness can disarm it.——'Tis decreed,
I must, for ever, love——but, from what cause,

If

If thy conſenting heart partakes my fires,
Art thou reluctant to a bleſſing, meant me;
Speak, is it levity——or, is it fear?
Fear of a power, that, but for bleſſing *thee*,
Had, without joy, been painful.——Is it artifice?
Oh! ſpare the needleſs pains——*Art* was not made
For Zara;——*Art*, however innocent,
Looks like deceiving:——I abhorr'd it, ever.
Zara. Alas! I have no art, not ev'n enough,
To hide this love, and this diſtreſs, you give me.
Oſm. New riddles! ſpeak, with plainneſs, to my ſoul;
What can'ſt thou mean?
Zara. I have no power to ſpeak it.
Oſm. Is it ſome ſecret, dangerous to my ſtate?
Is it ſome Chriſtian plot, grown ripe, againſt me?
Zara. Lives there a wretch, ſo vile, as to betray you!
Oſman is bleſs'd, beyond the reach of fear;
Fears, and misfortunes, threaten only Zara.
Oſm. *Why* threaten Zara?
Zara. Permit me, at your feet,
Thus, trembling, to beſeech a favour from you.
Oſm. A favour!—Oh! you guide the will of Oſman.
Zara. Ah! wou'd to Heaven, our duties were united,
Firm, as our thoughts and wiſhes!——But this day,
But this one ſad, unhappy day, permit me,
Alone, and far divided, from your eye,
To cover my diſtreſs, leſt you, too tender,
Shou'd ſee, and ſhare it with me——from to-morrow,
I will not have a thought, conceal'd from you.
Oſm. What ſtrange diſquiet! from what ſtranger cauſe?
Zara. If I am really bleſs'd with Oſman's love,
He will not, then, refuſe this humble prayer.
Oſm. If it muſt be, it muſt.---Be pleas'd----my will
Takes purpoſe, from your wiſhes;---and, conſent,
Depends not on my choice, but your decree:
Go—— but remember, how he loves, who thus,
Finds a delight in pain, becauſe you give it.
Zara. It gives me more than pain, to make you feel it.

Oſm.

Oſm. And——can you, Zara, leave me?

Zara. Alas! my Lord! [*Exit* Zara.

Oſm. [*Alone.*] It ſhou'd be, yet, methinks, too ſoon to fly me!
Too ſoon, as yet, to wrong my eaſy faith;
The *more* I think, the *leſs* I can conceive,
What hidden cauſe ſhou'd raiſe ſuch ſtrange deſpair!
Now, when her hopes have wings, and ev'ry wiſh
Is courted to be lively!——When I love,
And joy, and empire, preſs her to their boſom;
When, not alone belov'd, but, ev'n, a lover:
Profeſſing, and accepting; bleſs'd, and bleſſing:
To ſee her eyes, thro' tears, ſhine myſtic love!
'Tis madneſs! and I were unworthy power,
To ſuffer longer, the capricious inſult!
Yet, was I blameleſs?——No——I was too raſh;
I have felt jealouſy, and ſpoke it to her;
I have diſtruſted her——and, ſtill, ſhe loves:
Gen'rous atonement, that! and 'tis my duty
To expiate, by a length of ſoft indulgence,
The tranſports of a rage, which, ſtill, was love.
Henceforth, I, never, will ſuſpect her falſe;
Nature's plain power of charming dwells about her,
And innocence gives force to ev'ry word:
I owe full confidence to all, ſhe *looks*,
For, in her eye, ſhines truth, and ev'ry beam
Shoots confirmation round her:---I remark'd,
Ev'n, while ſhe wept, her ſoul, a thouſand times,
Sprung to her lips, and long'd to leap to mine,
With honeſt, ardent, utt'rance of her love.---
Who can poſſeſs a heart, ſo low, ſo baſe,
To look ſuch tenderneſs, and, yet, have none?

Enter Melidor, *with* Oraſmin.

Mel. This letter, great diſpoſer of the world!
Addreſs'd to Zara, and, in private brought,
Your faithful guards, this moment intercepted,

And, humbly, offer to your ſovereign eye.
Oſm. Come nearer; give it me---To Zara!---Riſe!
Bring it, with ſpeed---ſhame on your flatt'ring diſtance---
[*Advancing, and ſnatching the letter.*
Be honeſt---and approach me, like a ſubject,
Who ſerves the Prince, yet, not forgets the man.
Mel. One of the Chriſtian ſlaves, whom, late, your bounty
Releas'd from bondage, ſought, with heedful guile,
Unnotic'd, to deliver it,---diſcover'd
He waits, in chains, his doom, from your decree.
Oſm. Leave me——I tremble, as if ſomething fatal,
Were meant me, from this letter——ſhou'd I read it.
Oraſ. Who knows, but it contains ſome happy truth,
That may remove all doubts, and calm your heart?
Oſm. Be it, as 'twill——it *ſhall* be read——my hands
Have apprehenſion, that outreaches mine!
Why ſhou'd they tremble, thus?—'Tis done——and now,
[*Opens the letter.*
Fate, be thy call obey'd——Oraſmin, mark——

" There is a ſecret paſſage, toward the moſque,
" That way, you might eſcape; and, unperceiv'd,
" Fly your obſervers, and fulfil our hope;
" Deſpiſe the danger, and depend on me,
" Who wait you, but, to die, if you deceive.

Hell! tortures! death! and woman!—What? Oraſmin!
Are we awake? Heard'ſt thou? Can this be Zara?
Oraſ. Wou'd I had loſt all ſenſe—for, what I heard,
Has cover'd my afflicted heart with horror!
Oſm. Thou ſee'ſt, how I am treated?
Oraſ. Monſtrous treaſon!
To an affront, like this, you cannot—— muſt not——
Remain inſenſible——You, who, but now,
From the moſt ſlight ſuſpicion, felt ſuch pain,
Muſt, in the horror of ſo black a guilt,
Find an effectual cure, and baniſh love.

Oſm.

Oſm. Seek her, this inſtant—Go—Oraſmin, fly—
Shew her this letter—bid her read, and tremble!
Then, in the riſing horrors of her guilt,
Stab her unfaithful breaſt———and let her die.——
Say, while thou ſtrik'ſt—Stay, ſtay—return, and pity me!
I will think, firſt, a moment——— Let that Chriſtian
Be, ſtrait, confronted with her—Stay——I will,
I will——I know not what——Wou'd, I were dead!
Wou'd, I had dy'd, unconſcious of this ſhame!

Oraſ. Never did Prince receive ſo bold a wrong.

Oſm. See! here, detected, this infernal ſecret!
This fountain of her tears, which my weak heart
Miſtook for marks of tenderneſs and pain!
Why! what a reach has woman to deceive!
Under how fine a veil, of grief, and fear,
Did ſhe propoſe retirement, 'till to-morrow!
And I, blind dotard! gave the fool's conſent,
Sooth'd her, and ſuffer'd her to go!——She parted,
Diſſolv'd in tears; and parted, to betray me!

Oraſ Reflection ſerves but to confirm her guilt:
At length reſume yourſelf; awaken thought;
Aſſert your greatneſs; and reſolve like Oſman.

Oſm. Nereſtan, too!——Was this the boaſted honour
Of that proud Chriſtian? whom Jeruſalem
Grew loud, in praiſing! whoſe half-envy'd virtue
I wonder'd at myſelf! and felt diſdain,
To be but, equal to a Chriſtian's greatneſs!
And does he thank me thus?—— Baſe infidel!
Honeſt, pretending, pious, *praying*, villain!
Yet, Zara is, a thouſand times, more baſe,
More hypocrite, than he!——a ſlave! a wretch!
So low, ſo loſt, that, ev'n the vileſt labours,
In which he lay condemn'd, cou'd never ſink him
Beneath his native infamy!——Did ſhe not know,
What I have done, what ſuffer'd——for her ſake?

Oraſ. Cou'd you, my gracious Lord! forgive my zeal!
You wou'd———

Oſm. I know it——Thou art right—I'll *ſee* her——

I'll tax her, in thy preſence;——I'll upbraid her——
I'll let her *learn*——Go——find, and bring her, to me.
Oraſ. Alas! my Lord, diſorder'd as you are,
What can you wiſh to ſay?
Oſm. I know not, now:——
But I reſolve to ſee her——leſt ſhe think,
Her falſhood has, perhaps, the power to grieve me.
Oraſ. Believe me, Sir, your threatnings, your complaints,
What will they all produce, but Zara's tears,
To quench this fancy'd anger! Your loſt heart,
Seduc'd, againſt itſelf, will ſearch but reaſons,
To juſtify the guilt, which gives it pain:
Rather conceal, from Zara, this diſcovery;
And let ſome truſty ſlave convey the letter,
Reclos'd, to her own hand——then, ſhall you learn,
Spite of her frauds, diſguiſe, and artifice,
The firmneſs, or abaſement, of her ſoul.
Oſm. Thy counſel charms me! We'll about it, now:
'Twill be ſome recompence, at leaſt, to ſee
Her bluſhes, when detected——
Oraſ. Oh! my Lord,
I doubt you in the trial——for, your heart——
Oſm. Diſtruſt me not—my love, indeed, is weak,
But, honour, and diſdain, more ſtrong than Zara:
Here, take this fatal letter---chuſe a ſlave,
Whom, yet, ſhe never ſaw, and who retains
His try'd fidelity----diſpatch----be gone-- [*Exit* Oraſmin.
Now, whither ſhall I turn my eyes, and ſteps,
The ſureſt way, to ſhun her; and give time
For this diſcovering trial?---Heav'n! ſhe's here!

Enter Zara.

So, Madam! fortune will befriend my cauſe,
And free me from your fetters:——You are met,
Moſt aptly, to diſpel a new-ris'n doubt,
That claims the fineſt of your arts to gloſs it.
Unhappy, each, by other, it is time,

To

To end our mutual pain, that both may reſt:
You want not generoſity, but love:
My pride forgotten, my obtruded throne,
My favours, cares, reſpect, and tenderneſs,
Touching your gratitude, provok'd regard;
Till, by a length of benefits, beſieg'd,
Your heart ſubmitted, and you thought, 'twas love;
But, you deceiv'd yourſelf, and injur'd me.
There is, I'm told, an object, more deſerving
Your love, than Oſman—I wou'd know his name:
Be juſt, nor trifle with my anger: tell me,
Now, while expiring pity ſtruggles, faint;
While I have yet, perhaps, the pow'r to pardon;
Give up the bold invader of my claim,
And let him die, to ſave thee.—Thou art known;
Think, and reſolve—While I yet ſpeak, renounce him;
While yet the thunder rolls, ſuſpended, ſtop it;
Let thy voice charm me, and recall my ſoul,
That turns, averſe, and dwells no more on Zara.

Zara. Can it be Oſman, ſpeaks? and ſpeaks to Zara?
Learn, cruel! learn, that this afflicted heart,
This heart, which Heaven delights to prove, by tortures,
Did it not love, has pride, and pow'r to ſhun you:
Alas! you will not know me! What have I
To fear, but that unhappy love, you queſtion?
That love, which, only cou'd outweigh the ſhame,
I feel, while I deſcend, to weep my wrongs.
I know not, whether Heaven, that frowns upon me,
Has deſtin'd my unhappy days for yours;
But, be my fate, or bleſs'd, or curs'd, I ſwear,
By honour, dearer ev'n than life, or love,
Cou'd Zara be but miſtreſs of herſelf,
She wou'd, with cold regard, look down on Kings,
And, you alone excepted, fly 'em all:
Wou'd you learn more, and open all my heart?
Know then, that, ſpite of this renew'd injuſtice,
I do not——cannot——wiſh to love you leſs:
That, long before you look'd ſo low as Zara,

She gave her heart to Oſman—Yours, before
Your benefits had bought her, or your eye
Had thrown diſtinction round her; never had,
Nor ever will acknowledge, other lover.—
And, to this ſacred truth, atteſting Heaven!
I call thy dreadful notice! If my heart
Deſerves reproach, 'tis *for*, but not *from* Oſman.

Oſm. What! does ſhe, yet, preſume to ſwear ſincerity!
Oh! boldneſs of unblushing perjury!
Had I not ſeen, had I not read, ſuch proof,
Of her light falſhood, as extinguiſh'd doubt,
I cou'd not be a man, and not believe her.

Zara. Alas! my Lord, what cruel fears have ſeiz'd you?
What harſh, myſterious words were thoſe, I heard?

Oſm. What fears ſhou'd Oſman feel, ſince Zara loves him!

Zara. I cannot live, and anſwer to your voice,
In that reproachful tone!—Your angry eye
Trembles with fury, while you talk of love!

Oſm. Since Zara *loves* him!

Zara. Is it poſſible,
Oſman ſhou'd disbelieve it?—Again, again
Your late repented violence returns;
Alas! what killing frowns you dart againſt me!
Can it be kind? Can it be juſt, to doubt me?

Oſm. No—I can doubt no longer—You may retire.

[*Exit* Zara.

Re-enter Oraſmin.

Oraſmin! ſhe's perfidious, ev'n beyond
Her ſex's undiſcover'd power of ſeeming:
She's at the topmoſt point of ſhameleſs artifice;
An Empreſs at deceiving!—ſoft, and eaſy,
Deſtroying like a plague, in calm tranquillity:
She's innocent, ſhe ſwears—So is the fire;
It *ſhines*, in harmleſs diſtance, bright, and pleaſing,
Conſuming nothing, till it firſt embraces.—
Say? haſt thou chos'n a ſlave?—Is he inſtructed?

Haſte,

Haſte, to detect her vileneſs, and my wrongs.
Oraſ. Punctual, I have obey'd your whole command;
But, have you arm'd, my Lord, your injur'd heart,
With coldneſs, and indiff'rence? Can you hear,
All, painleſs, and unmov'd, the falſe one's ſhame?
Oſm. Oraſmin! I adore her, more than ever!
Oraſ. My Lord! my Emperor! forbid it, Heaven!
Oſm. I have diſcern'd a gleam of diſtant hope;
This hateful Chriſtian, the light growth of France,
Proud, young, vain, amorous, conceited, raſh,
Has miſconceiv'd ſome charitable glance,
And judg'd it love in Zara:---He alone,
Then, has offended me.---Is it her fault,
If thoſe, ſhe charms, are indiſcreet and daring?
Zara, perhaps, expected not this letter;
And I, with raſhneſs, groundleſs, as its writer's,
Took fire, at my own fancy, and have wrong'd her.
Now, hear me, with attention---Soon as night
Has thrown her welcome ſhadows o'er the palace;
When this Nereſtan, this ungrateful Chriſtian,
Shall lurk, in expectation, near our walls,
Be watchful, that our guards ſurprize, and ſeize him;
Then, bound in fetters, and o'erwhelm'd with ſhame,
Conduct the daring traitor, to my preſence;
But, above all, be ſure, you hurt not Zara:
Mindful, to what ſupreme exceſs, I love.
I feel, I muſt confeſs, a kind of ſhame,
And bluſh, at my own tenderneſs;---but, faith,
Howe'er it ſeems deceiv'd, were weak, as I am,
Cou'd it admit diſtruſt, to blot its face,
And give appearance way, till proof takes place.

ACT V. SCENE I.

Zara, Selima.

Zara. SOOTH me, no longer, with this vain deſire;
To a recluſe, like *me*, *who* dares, henceforth,
Preſume admiſſion!—The ſeraglio's *ſhut*---
Barr'd, and unpaſſable—as *death* to *time!*
My brother ne'er muſt hope to ſee me, more:——
How now! what unknown ſlave accoſts us here!

Enter Melidor.

Mel. This letter, truſted to my hands, receive,
In ſecret witneſs, I am, wholly, yours,
[Zara *reads the letter.*

Sel. [*Aſide.*] Thou, everlaſting Ruler of the world!
Shed thy wiſh'd mercy on our hopeleſs tears;
Redeem us from the hands of hated infidels,
And ſave my Princeſs from the breaſt of Oſman.

Zara. I wiſh, my friend, the comfort of your counſel.

Sel. Retire---you ſhall be call'd---wait near--Go, leave us. [*Exit* Melidor.

Zara. Read this—and tell me, what I ought to anſwer?
For I wou'd gladly hear my brother's voice.

Sel. Say rather, you wou'd hear the voice of Heav'n.
'Tis not your brother calls you, but your God.

Zara. I know it, nor reſiſt his aweful will;
Thou know'ſt, that I have bound my ſoul by oath;
But, can I——ought I—to engage myſelf,
My brother, and the Chriſtians in this danger?

Sel. 'Tis not their danger, that alarms your fear;
Your love ſpeaks loudeſt, to your ſhrinking ſoul;
I know your heart, of ſtrength, to hazard all,

But,

But, it has let in traitors, who ſurrender,
On poor pretence of ſafety :---Learn, at leaſt,
To underſtand the weakneſs, that deceives you :
You tremble, to offend your haughty lover,
Whom wrongs, and outrage, but endear the more ;
Yes——— you are blind to Oſman's cruel nature,
That Tartar's fierceneſs, that obſcures his bounties :
This tyger, ſavage, in his tenderneſs,
Courts, with contempt, and threatens, amidſt ſoftneſs ;
Yet, cannot your neglected heart efface
His fated, fix'd, impreſſion !

Zara. What reproach
Can I, with juſtice, make him ?----I, indeed,
Have given him cauſe to hate me !——
Was not his throne, was not his temple, ready ?
Did not he court his ſlave, to be a Queen ?
And have not I declin'd it ?----I, who ought
To tremble, conſcious of affronted power !
Have not I triumph'd o'er his pride, and love ?
Seen him ſubmit his own high will, to mine ?
And ſacrifice his wiſhes to my weakneſs ?

Sel. Talk we, no more, of this unhappy paſſion :
What reſolution will your virtue take ?

Zara. All things combine, to ſink me to deſpair :
From the ſeraglio, death alone will free me.
I long to ſee the Chriſtians' happy climes ;
Yet, in the moment, while I form that prayer,
I ſigh a ſecret wiſh, to languiſh here :
How ſad a ſtate is mine ! my reſtleſs ſoul
All ign'rant, what to do, or what to wiſh ?
My only *perfect* ſenſe is, that of pain.
O, guardian Heaven ! protect my brother's life :
For I will meet him, and fulfil his prayer.
Then, when, from Solyma's unfriendly walls,
His abſence ſhall unbind his ſiſter's tongue,
Oſman ſhall learn the ſecret of my birth,
My faith unſhaken, and my deathleſs love ;
He will approve my choice, and pity me.

I'll

I'll ſend my brother word, he may expect me;
Call in the faithful ſlave---God of my fathers!
[*Exit* Selima.
Let thy hand ſave me, and thy will direct.

Enter Selima, *and* Melidor.

Go——tell the Chriſtian, who intruſted thee,
That Zara's heart is fix'd, nor ſhrinks at danger;
And, that my faithful friend will, at the hour,
Expect, and introduce him, to his wiſh.
Away—the Sultan comes; he muſt not find us.
[*Exeunt* Zara *and* Selima.

Enter Oſman, *and* Oraſmin.

Oſm. Swifter, ye hours, move on; my fury glows
Impatient, and wou'd puſh the wheels of time:—
How now! What meſſage doſt thou bring? Speak boldly,
What anſwer gave ſhe, to the letter ſent her?
Mel. She bluſh'd, and trembled, and grew pale, and paus'd;
Then bluſh'd, and read it; and, again, grew pale;
And wept, and ſmil'd, and doubted, and reſolv'd:
For, after all this race of vary'd paſſions,
When ſhe had ſent me out, and call'd me back,
Tell him (ſhe cry'd) who has intruſted thee,
That Zara's heart is fix'd, nor ſhrinks at danger;
And, that my faithful friend will, at the hour,
Expect, and introduce him, to his wiſh.
Oſm. Enough—be gone—I have no ear for more.—
[*To the ſlave.*
Leave me, thou too, Oraſmin.—Leave me, life,
[*To* Oraſmin.
For, ev'ry mortal aſpect moves my hate:
Leave me, to my diſtraction—I grow mad,
And cannot bear the viſage of a friend.
Leave me, to rage, deſpair, and ſhame, and wrongs;
Leave me, to ſeek myſelf——and ſhun mankind.

[*Alone.*] Who *am* I?--Heav'n! Who am I? What reſolve I?
Zara! Nereſſian! Sound thoſe words, like names
Decreed to join!—Why pauſe I?—Periſh Zara——
Wou'd, I cou'd tear her image from my heart:——
'Twere happier, not to live at all, than live
Her ſcorn, the ſport of an ungrateful falſe one!
And ſink the Sovereign, in a woman's property.

Re-enter Oraſmin.

Oraſmin!—friend! return—I cannot bear
This abſence, from thy reaſon: 'twas unkind,
'Twas cruel, to obey me, thus diſtreſs'd,
And wanting pow'r to *think*, when I had loſt thee.
How goes the hour? Has he appear'd? This rival!
Periſh the ſhameful ſound—This villain Chriſtian!
Has he appear'd below?

Oraſ. Silent, and dark,
Th' unbreathing world is huſh'd, as if it heard,
And liſten'd to, your ſorrows.

Oſm. O, treach'rous night!
Thou lend'ſt thy ready veil, to ev'ry treaſon,
And teeming miſchiefs thrive, beneath thy ſhade.
Oraſmin! Prophet! reaſon! truth! and love!
After ſuch length of benefits to wrong me!
How have I over-rated, how miſtaken,
The merit of her beauty!—Did I not
Forget, I was a Monarch? Did I remember,
That Zara was a ſlave?—I gave up all;
Gave up tranquillity, diſtinction, pride,
And fell, the ſhameful victim of my love!

Oraſ. Sir! Sovereign! Sultan! my Imperial Maſter!
Reflect on your own greatneſs, and diſdain
The diſtant provocation.——

Oſm. Heard'ſt thou nothing?

Oraſ. My Lord?

Oſm. A noiſe, like dying groans?

Oraſ. I liſten, but can hear nothing.

Oſm.

Oſm. Again!—look out—he comes.—

Oraſ. Nor tread of mortal foot—nor voice, I hear:
The ſtill ſeraglio lies, profoundly plung'd,
In deathlike ſilence! nothing ſtirs.—The air
Is ſoft, as infants' ſleep, no breathing wind
Steals thro' the ſhadows, to awaken night.

Oſm. Horrors, a thouſand times more dark, than theſe,
Benight my ſuff'ring ſoul—Thou doſt not know,
To what exceſs of tenderneſs, I lov'd her.
I knew no happineſs, but what ſhe gave me,
Nor cou'd have felt a mis'ry, but for her!
Pity this weakneſs——Mine are tears, Oraſmin!
That fall not oft, nor lightly.—

Oraſ. Tears!—Oh, Heaven!

Oſm. The firſt, which, ever, yet, unmann'd my eyes!
O! pity Zara—pity *me*—Oraſmin,
Theſe but forerun the tears of deſtin'd blood.

Oraſ. Oh, my unhappy Lord!---I tremble for you---

Oſm. Do---tremble at my ſuff'rings, at my love;
At my revenge, too, tremble---for, 'tis due,
And will not be deluded.

Oraſ. Hark! I hear
The ſteps of men, along the neighb'ring wall!———

Oſm. Fly—ſeize him—'tis Nereſtan? wait no chains,
But, drag him down, to my impatient eye. [*Exit.* Oraſ.

Enter Zara, *and* Selima, *in the dark.*

Zara. Where art thou, Selima? Give me thy hand;
It is ſo dark, I tremble, as I ſtep,
With fears, and ſtartings, never felt, 'till now!

Oſm. Damnation! 'tis her voice! the well-known ſound,
That has, ſo often, charm'd me into baſeneſs!
Oh! the perfidious hypocrite!——— ſhe goes,
To meet th' inviting Infidel!——— now, now,
[*Drawing a dagger.*
Revenge, ſtand firm, and intercept his wiſhes:——
Revenge! on whom?—no matter—earth and heaven,
Wou'd

Wou'd bluſh, ſhou'd I forbear :—Now—Zara, now ;
[*Drops the dagger.*
I muſt not——cannot ſtrike, the ſtarting ſteel,
Unwilling, flies my hand, and ſhuns to wound her.
Zara. This is the private path—come nearer, lead me--
Are we not notic'd, think'ſt thou ?
Sel. Fear not, Madam ;
It cannot, now, be long, ere we ſhall meet him.
Oſm. That word has giv'n me back my ebbing rage.
[*Recovers the dagger.*
Zara. I walk in terror, and my heart forbodes :
Who's there ?—Nereſtan ! Is it you !—Oh! welcome—
Oſm. [*Stabbing her.*] This to thy heart——'Tis not the traitor meets thee,
'Tis the betray'd——who writes it in thy blood.
Zara O, gracious Heaven ! receive my parting ſoul.
[*Dies.*
Oſm. Soul ?--then revenge has reach'd thee--I will, now,
Haſte, from this fatal place ——— I cannot leave her !
Whom did I ſtrike ? Was this the act of love ?
Swallow me, earth !——She's ſilent——Zara's dead !
And ſhould I live, to ſee returning day,
'Twill ſhew me but her blood !——ſhew me, left joyleſs,
In a wide, empty, world, with nothing round me,
But penitence, and pain——and, yet, 'twas juſt : ——
Hark !——Deſtiny has ſent her lover to me,
To fill my vengeance, and reſtore my joy.

Enter Oraſmin, *with* Nereſtan.

Approach, thou wretch! thou more than curs'd! come near———
Thou ! who, in gratitude, for freedom gain'd,
Haſt given *me* miſeries, beyond thy own !
Thou heart of heroe, with a traitor's ſoul !
Go——reap thy due reward, prepare to ſuffer,
Whate'er inventive malice can inflict,
To make thee *feel* thy death, and periſh, ſlow.

Are my commands obey'd?
Oraſ. All is prepar'd.
Oſm. Thy wanton eyes look round, in ſearch of her,
Whoſe love, deſcending to a ſlave like thee,
From my diſhonour'd hand, receiv'd her doom?
See! where ſhe lies——
Ner. O, fatal, raſh, miſtake!
Oſm. Doſt thou behold her, ſlave?
Ner. Unhappy ſiſter!
Oſm. Siſter!——Did'ſt thou ſay, ſiſter? if thou did'ſt,
Bleſs me with deafneſs, Heaven!
Ner. Tyrant! I did——
She *was* my ſiſter——All, that, now, is left thee,
Diſpatch——From my diſtracted heart, drain, next,
The remnant of the royal, Chriſtian, blood;
Old Luſignan, expiring in my arms,
Sent his too wretched ſon, with his laſt bleſſing,
To his, now, murder'd daughter!——
Wou'd, I had ſeen the bleeding innocent!
I wou'd have liv'd to ſpeak to her, in death;
Wou'd have awaken'd, in her languid heart,
A livelier ſenſe of her abandon'd God:
That God, who, left by her, forſook her, too,
And gave the poor, loſt, ſuff'rer, to thy rage.
Oſm. Thy ſiſter?—Luſignan, her father——Selima!
Can this be true!—and have I wrong'd thee, Zara?
Sel. Thy love was all the cloud, 'twixt her, and Heav'n!
Oſm. Be dumb--for thou art baſe, to add diſtraction,
To my, already, more, than bleeding, heart:
And was thy love ſincere?——What, then, remains?
Ner. Why ſhou'd a tyrant heſitate, on murder!
There, now, remains, but mine, of all the blood,
Which, thro' thy father's cruel reign, and thine,
Has, never, ceas'd to ſtream, on Syria's ſands;
Reſtore a wretch to his unhappy race;
Nor hope, that torments, after ſuch a ſcene,
Can force one feeble groan, to feaſt thy anger.
I waſte my fruitleſs words, in empty air;

The

The tyrant, o'er the bleeding wound, he made,
Hangs his unmoving eye, and heeds not me.
Oſm. O, Zara!——
Oraſ. Alas! my Lord, return—whither wou'd grief
Tranſport your gen'rous heart?—This Chriſtian dog---
Oſm. Take off his fetters, and obſerve my will:
To him, and all his friends, give inſtant liberty:
Pour a profuſion, of the richeſt gifts,
On theſe unhappy Chriſtians; and, when heap'd,
With vary'd benefits, and charg'd, with riches,
Give 'em ſafe conduct, to the neareſt port.
Oraſ. But, Sir!——
Oſm. Reply not, but obey.——
Fly---nor diſpute thy Maſter's laſt command,
Thy Prince, who orders---and thy friend, who loves thee!
Go---loſe no time---farewel---be gone---And thou!
Unhappy warrior!---yet, leſs loſt, than I!
Haſte, from our bloody land---and, to thy own,
Convey this poor, pale, object of my rage;
Thy King, and all his Chriſtians, when they hear
Thy miſeries, ſhall mourn 'em, with their tears;
But, if thou tell'ſt 'em mine, and tell'ſt 'em, truly,
They, who ſhall hate my crime, ſhall pity *me*.
Take, too, this poinard, with thee, which my hand
Has ſtain'd with blood, far dearer, than my own;
Tell 'em---with this, I murder'd, her, I lov'd;
The nobleſt, and moſt virtuous, among women!
The ſoul of innocence, and pride of truth!
Tell 'em, I laid my empire at her feet:
Tell 'em, I plung'd my dagger in her blood;
Tell 'em, I ſo ador'd---and, thus reveng'd her.
[*Stabs himſelf.*
Rev'rence this heroe---and, conduct him, ſafe. [*Dies.*
Ner. Direct me, great Inſpirer of the ſoul!
How I ſhou'd act, how judge in this diſtreſs?
Amazing grandeur! and deteſted rage!
Ev'n I, amidſt my tears, admire this foe,
And mourn his death, who liv'd, to give me woe.

A COMIC

A COMIC CHORUS,

OR,

INTERLUDES:

To be ſung between the Acts of ZARA.

PROLOGUE.

By Mr. BEARD, and Mrs. CLIVE, *from oppoſite Entrances.*

She. *SO Sir---you're a man of your word.*
He. Who *wou'd break it, when ſummon'd by* you ?--
She. *Very fine that---but pray, have you heard,*
What it is you are ſummon'd to do?
He. *Not a word---but expected to ſee*
Something new, *in the* muſical *way.*
She. *Why, this* Author *has caſt you, and me,*
As a Prologue, *it ſeems, to his* play.
He. *What then is its tuneful name,*
Robin Hood, *of the Greenwood tree?*
Or, what good old ballad *of fame*
Has he built into Tra--ge- dy?

She.

She. *Tho' he rails againſt* ſongs, *he thought fit,*
Moſt gravely to urge, and implore us,
In aid of his tragical *wit,*
To erect ourſelves into a chorus! [*Laughing.*

He. *A chorus! what's that---a compoſing*
Of groans, *to the rants of his* madneſs?

She. *No---he hinders the* boxes *from* dozing,
By mixing ſome ſpirit *with ſadneſs.*

He. *So, then---'tis our taſk, I ſuppoſe,*
To ſing *ſober ſenſe into* reliſh,
Strike up, at each tragical cloſe,
And unheeded moral *embelliſh.*

She. *'Twas the* cuſtom, *you know, once in* Greece,
And, if here, *'tis not* witty, *'tis* new

He. *Well then, when find you an* act *ceaſe,* [*Turning to the boxes.*
Tremble Ladies ——

She. *And,* Gentlemen, *too* —— [*To the Men.*
If I give not the beaux *good advice,* [*Merrily.*
Let me dwindle to recitative!

He. *Nor will I to the* belles *be more nice,*
When I catch 'em, but here, *to receive.*

She. *If there's ought to be* learnt *from the play,*
I ſhall ſit in a nook, *here, behind,*
Popping out, in the good ancient way,
Now and then, with a piece of my mind.

He. *But ſuppoſe, that* no moral *ſhou'd* riſe,
Worth the ears *of the* brave, *or the* fair!

She. *Why, we'll then give the word--and adviſe* ——
Face about, *and ſtand all,* as ye were.

After the Firſt ACT.

Song in duet.

He THE *Sultan*'s a bridegroom---the *ſlaves* are ſet **free,**
And none muſt preſume to wear *fetters*, but **he!**
Before honey-moon,
Love's *fiddle's* in tune;
So we think, (ſilly ſouls!) 'tis always to be:
For the man, that is *blind*—how ſhou'd he FORESEE!
She. I hate theſe *hot blades*, who ſo *fiercely* begin;
To *baulk* a rais'd *hope*, is a *cowardly* ſin!
The *maid* that is *wiſe*, let her always procure,
Rather a *grave*, than a *ſpirited* woer:
What ſhe *loſes*, at breakfaſt, at ſupper ſhe'll *win*.
But your *amorous* violence never *endures*:
For, to dance, without doors,
Is the way to be *weary*, before we get *in*.
He. Pray how does it happen, that paſſion, ſo gay,
Blooms, fades, and falls away,
Like the *roſe*, of this morn, that at night muſt decay?
WOMAN, I fear,
Does one thing appear,
But is found quite *another*, when look'd on, too near.
She. Ah---no---
Not---ſo
'Tis the fault of you MEN, who, with *flames of deſire*,
Set your *palates* on *fire*,
And dream not, that *eating*---will appetite *tire*;
So, reſolve in your *heat*,
To do nothing, but *eat*,
Till, alas! on a ſudden,---you *ſleep* o'er your meat!
Therefore, learn, O ye *fair!* ——
He. And, you *lovers*, take care ——

She.

She. That you truſt not, before-hand ---
He. That you truſt not, at all.
She. Man was born to deceive.
He. Woman form'd, to believe.
Both. Truſt not *one* of us all!
For to ſtand on *ſure* ground, is the way not to *fall.*

After the Second ACT.

Mrs. Clive *(ſola) to a flute.*

1.

O H *Jealouſy!* thou *bane* of bleeding love!
Ah! how unhappy, we!
Doom'd by the partial powers, above,
Eternal ſlaves, to thee!
Not more unſtaid, than *lovers'* hearts, the *wind!*
This moment, *dying*—and the next, *unkind:*
Ah! wavering, weak deſires of frail *mankind!*
With pleading paſſion ever to purſue,
Yet triumph, only to *undo.*

2.

Go to the *deeps*, *below*, thou joyleſs *fiend!*
And never *riſe* again, to ſow *deſpair*;
Nor you, ye heedleſs *fair*, occaſions lend,
To *blaſt* your blooming *hopes*, and bring on care.
Never conclude your *innocence* ſecure,
Prudence, alone, makes *love* endure.
[As ſhe is going off, he meets her, and pulls her back, detaining her, while he ſings, what follows.
He. Ever, ever, *doubt* the *fair*—in *ſorrow.*
Mourning, as if they felt *compaſſion*;
Yet, what they *weep for* to day—to-morrow,
They'll be the firſt to laugh into *faſhion.*

None are betray'd if they *truſt not* the charmer;
Jealouſy *guards* the weak, from *falling*;
Wou'd you never *catch*—you muſt, oft, *alarm* her,
Hearts to *deceive* is a woman's *calling*.
[*After the ſong he lets her go, and they join in duet.*

She. Come,—let us be *friends*, and no longer *abuſe*,
condemn, and acuſe,
each other.

He. Wou'd you have us *agree*, you muſt, fairly, confeſs,
the love, we careſs,
we ſmother.

She. I am loth to think that ——

He. Yet, you know, it is *true*;

She. Well,—what if I *do*,
no matter.

He. Cou'd you teach us a way, to *love on*, without ſtrife?

She. Suit the *firſt* part of life,
to the *latter*.

He. 'Tis an honeſt *advice*, for, when *love* is new blown,—
gay colours are ſhown,
too glaring.

She. Then alas! for *poor wives!*—comes a *bluſt'ring* day,
and blows 'em away,
moſt ſcaring!

After the Third ACT.

By Mr. Beard *alone.*

MARK, O, ye beauties!—gay, and young,
Mark the plainful *woes*, and *weeping*,
That, from forc'd *concealment* ſprung,
Puniſh the ſin of *ſecret* keeping.
Tell then—nor *veil* a willing heart,
When the *lover*, *lov'd*, alarms it;
But—to *ſooth* the pleaſing *ſmart*,
Whiſper the glowing *wiſh*, that warms it.

She that wou'd *hide* the gentle flame,
Does but teach her *hope*, to languiſh;
She, that boldly TELLS her aim,
Flies from the *path* that leads to *anguiſh*.
Not that too *far*, your truſt ſhou'd go;
All that you *ſay*—to ALL diſcover;
All, that you *do*——but *two* ſhould know,
One of 'em *you*, and one your *lover*.
[*She meets him, going off.*

She. Ah! *man*, thou wert always a *traitor*,
Thou giv'ſt thy advice, to *betray*;
Ah! form'd for a *rover*, by nature,
Thou leader of love the wrong way.
Wou'd *women* let *women* adviſe 'em,
They cou'd not ſo eaſily *ſtray*.
'Tis truſting to lovers, ſupplies 'em
With *will*, and *excuſe*, to betray.
She's *ſafe*, who, in *guard* of her paſſion,
Far, far, from *confeſſing* her pain,
Keeps *ſilence*, in ſpite of the *faſhion*,
Nor ſuffer her *eyes*, to EXPLAIN.

After the Fourth ACT.

Duet.

She. WELL, what do you *think*----of theſe ſorrows, and joys,
Theſe calms, and theſe whirlwinds-- this ſilence, and noiſe?
Which *love*, in the boſom of *man*, employs?
He. For my part, wou'd *lovers* be govern'd by me,
Not *one* of you *women* ſo *wiſh'd for*, ſhou'd be,
Since, *here*, we a *proof* of your miſchief ſee.
She. Why, what wou'd you do, to eſcape the diſtreſs?
He. I wou'd *do*--I wou'd *do*--by my ſoul, I can't gueſs--

She. Poor wretch! by my ſoul I imagin'd no leſs.
Come, come---let me tell you, theſe tempeſts of love,
Do but blow up *deſire*, its briſkneſs to *prove*,
Which elſe wou'd---you know—*too too lazily* move.
Were women like *logs*---of a make to *lie* ſtill,
Men wou'd ſleep, and grow dull—but *our abſolute will*
Sets *life* all a whirling---like wheels in a mill:
He. Ambition, in *woman*, like valour in *man*,
Tempts danger---from which, they'd be ſafe, if they *ran*;
And once get 'em *in*—get 'em *cut*, how you can.
She. Pray, what will you give me, to teach you the *trick*,
To keep your wife *pleas'd*, either healthy, or ſick?
He. The man, who *hits* that, ſure! muſt *touch to the quick!*
She. Learn this—and depend on a *life*, without *pain*,
Say nothing to *vex* her, yet *let* her complain;
Submit to your *fate*,—and diſturb not her *reign*:
Be *mop'd* when ſhe's *ſad*—and be *pleas'd* when ſhe's *gay*,
Believe her, and truſt her—and give her—her *way*;
For want of this *rule*—there's *the devil to pay*,
Both. For want of this *rule*, there's *the devil to pay*.

THE

THE

SNAKE in the GRASS:

A

Dramatic Entertainment, of a new Species;

BEING

Neither TRAGEDY, COMEDY, PANTOMIME,
FARCE, BALLAD, nor OPERA.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

TWO PLAYERS, *deep Plotters, as uſual.*

POET, *a tough ſtubborn Blade of the old Metal: but converted, by the Grace of certain new-faſhioned Powers interpoſing.*

GENIUS of the Stage, *dreſs'd and character'd in the modern Propriety.*

TRAGEDY, *ſtruck dumb, and buried alive.*

COMEDY, *ſet upon her Head, and her wrong End turned uppermoſt.*

Old APOLLO, *ſtruck blind, and diſmounted.*

Firſt ſinging Spirit.

Second ſinging Spirit.

Young APOLLO, *Laureat ſupreme, but conferring Bays of a new Model, on a Laureat elect, to encourage him.*

TRUTH and TIME, *two Dancers.*

SCENE, the STAGE.

THE

SNAKE in the GRASS.

SCENE, *the Stage. Enter two Players.*

1*ſt* Player, [*looking on his watch*].

IT is now ten o'clock: and Mr. Fightfaſhion, in expectation of our rehearſing his tragedy, will ſcarce fail to be here, in a minute or two.

2*d Play.* But can this gentleman, in good earneſt, be ſo ſtrongly impreſs'd by poetic enthuſiaſm, as to believe the exiſtence of ghoſts, wits, and genius's?

1*ſt Play.* Tho' you throw thoſe ideas together by way of a joke, Mr. Fightfaſhion unites 'em in earneſt; for he has told me, and ſworn to it very ſeriouſly, that the Genius of wit, the laſt time he was ſeduced to the ſight of a pantomine, drew his curtains at midnight, and wept over him in the ſhape of a conſumption.

[*Diſtant knocking without.*

2*d Play.* Hark, he knocks at the ſtreet-door: let us retire, and obſerve the ſucceſs of your project; for I hardly know how to perſuade myſelf, that a perſon of his learning and good ſenſe can be liable to an impoſition ſo glaring! [*Second knocking at the door.*

1*ſt Play.* Oh! that were to expect more than I have ventured to promiſe you; but the voice and perſon of Ned

Ned Frolick are quite new to him; the influence of melancholy, in penſive natures, is powerful. The darkneſs too, and ſilence of the ſcene, will concur with the effect of our neglecting his rehearſal this morning, towards preparing his mind for the object.——'Tis unlikely indeed, as you ſay, that he can miſtake honeſt Ned for a Genius; but his reſentment, or ſurprize, will be equally diverting—and while he thinks us too remote to obſerve his behaviour, we ſhall have the pleaſure to laugh in the flys, whether it be at the detection and routing of Frolick, or the amazement and odd humours of Fightfaſhion.

[*Third knockng, more loud than before.*

Let us be gone—He becomes quiet impatient: and the doorkeeper's orders were to admit him, at the third time of aſking.

[*They go in at the Prompter's door.*

Enter Poet, *in a paſſion.*

Oons!—not *rehearſe?*—and nobody ready for action, but the *Ladies?*—Here's fine doings! here's wiſdom! here's induſtry! here's management!

[*Sings.*] Robin Hood,
In the Greenwood ſtood——

P'ſha!——how came that ſilly thing into my head now!——A man has no ſooner ſet his foot into the ſhade of theſe theatres, than he is haunted by the dying echo of ſome departed old madrigal! [*Hums, again, to himſelf a ſhort bit of a tune, and walks fretfully.*

Rare management, i'faith!—one wou'd almoſt be tempted to ſwear they had bought ſome old patent for blundering!——Dullneſs never ſleeps ſo ſafe, and ſo ſatisfied, but when it ſnores to the ſound of authority.

And then, too, the good manners of locking me out! They needed not, one wou'd have thought, as taſte ſtands at preſent, have put themſelves to the trouble of faſt'ning their door, to keep *wit* from intruding among them! [*Walks backward and forward, looking down much diſturb'd---then ſtops ſhort, and ſpeaks on.*

Poor

Poor ſtage! while I meaſure thy breadth, I am deploring thy narrowneſs!——Thou art poſſeſs'd, like an African wood--by a generation of *parrots* and *monkeys!*——Theſe people have a mortal averſion for a man that can't *tumble.*——What a favourite wou'd a tragic Poet have been, that cou'd come bounce into the houſe, like a thunder clap, through the opening of one of their chimneys!

Well! they may ſpare, in a little time, this new ſtratagem of locking their doors. They have ſhut out grave meanings already; and when ſharp ones won't paſs muſter among 'em, we Poets ſhall have as little to do at the playhouſe, as we have at the bank, or the treaſury.

[*Pauſes, and hangs penſively over a trap.*

Oh! Shakeſpear! Shakeſpear! Shakeſpear!——Cou'd thy own ghoſt riſe, through one of theſe traps, when the Signors and Signoras are capering, it would riſe, not to fright, but *be frighted.*——How now? what's this? the trap opens, as if they had *ſet* it to ſwallow me!

While the Poet ſtalks backward, the Genius of the ſtage aſcends through the trap: dreſſed on the right ſide, like a man, in the habit of a Scaramouch *(with a wand)*——*on the left ſide like a* Columbine *(with a fan)*——*the face neatly cover'd with a fleſh-colour'd maſque, repreſenting on one ſide a grave* man's *countenance, with black hair and whiſkers; and on the other, a gay young* woman's, *with fair locks and complexion; half a hat, or cap, on the right of the head, and the proper head-dreſs for a woman on the left half: and ſo, in like manner, the whole dreſs divided quite down to the ſhoes----the petticoat rounded in, and concealing the left leg and thigh, to the girdle.*

Poet. Bleſs us! what have we here?---they have ſent up a two-edged ghoſt, to foretell double death to my tragedy!---What *art* thou? ſpeak.---What monſter muſt I call thee?

Gen. [*In a tragical tone.*] Know'ſt thou not ME,---the *Genius* of *the ſtage!*

Learn,

Learn, from the loud Miltonic trumpet's ſound,
" Not to know *me*, argues *thyſelf unknown.*

[*Changes into a comic tone.*

Ha, ha, ha, ha, 'tis no wonder, Mr. Fightfaſhion, that your poetry ſucceeds ſo ill, ſince you and I are no better acquainted!

Poet. The Genius of the ſtage, quoth'a!——

[*Walks whimſically round her.*

Nay, faith, now I ſurvey thee with a critical eye, that is not ſo very *unlikely*. 'Tis impoſſible (to ſay truth) there ſhould be *ſuch* a Genius any where elſe!—All that motly compoſition of contraries fits thee admirably, for the empire thou haſt plac'd thyſelf at the head of.

Genius. Ever, the Poet's friend, tho' ſeen but rarely, I riſe, to ſet thee right: and crown thy wiſhes.

Poet. I am glad, to be aſſur'd of your good meaning, becauſe it emboldens me to make free with your good *nature*—will you pleaſe to ſtand out of the way: and leave room for a Lady, of leſs inconſiſtent accompliſhments?

Gen. What Lady, ingenious Mr. Fightfaſhion?—— What Lady?

Poet. What Lady? why a playhouſe Lady—that, I hope, is here, ready to enter, and ſpeak the prologue to my tragedy.

Gen. A prologue, I ſuppoſe, of ſome *friend's* writing?

Poet. You wou'd *ſuppoſe*, with more truth, and at leaſt as much manners, if you *ſuppos'd* it a prologue of my *own* writing.

Gen. Nay, then, I deſpair of getting it chang'd for a better. Had it been a friend's wit, another friend's *reaſon* might have hop'd to be heard on the ſubject.

Poet. There's a new proof, thou can'ſt be no other Genius than that of the ſtage.—Thy impertinence to us Poets, and the prepoſt'rous blind talent thou haſt at *objecting*, carry marks of the place thou belong'ſt to.—— But pray, what againſt my prologue, Goody Two-tails?

Gen. Enough---and too much, Mr. Fightfaſhion.—It is a prologue to a *tragedy.*

Poet.

Poet. To a tragedy!——What, in the name of high dance, and low management, wou'd you have it a prologue to?—the ſtage's thankſgiving, for the renown of her modern *improvements?*—Do you think there is no *wit*, becauſe there is no *comedy?*

Gen. Nay, now, you are ſtill more monſtrouſly out of the way! Don't talk of wit.----*wit* is *quite* out of the way!

Poet. O! times! times! times!---wit out of the way of a *Poet!*——If thou art the Genius of any ſtage at all, thou haſt certainly travell'd under-ground, like a *mole*; and are crept hither from the *Italian opera.*

Gen. No matter what road I came by:---wit is out of *your* road, I aſſure you.——Wou'd you ſtrike the expectation of the powerful world with your tragedy, you muſt enliven it with no wit, and all *humour.*

Poet. How?---*humour* in *tragedy!*----here's a *Genius!* here's an age!---*Why had I taſte, ye* GODS!

Gen. Look'ee, Mr. Fightfaſhion, I am here in mere pity, to prevent a diſappointment, which I know you want temper to bear, with indifference.——If you cou'd introduce a dancing cat or two, in ſome very grave tragedy, and eſpecially, if you cou'd teach 'em to *purr* in true time to their friſkings, you might have a fair chance, (under protection of ſuch alarming and rapturous incidents) to paſs ſome of your old-faſhion'd ſtuff upon the town, provided you don't crowd in too much of it—more than perſons of diſtinction can bear to be teas'd with.——And then, as to your prologue, what do you think of the novelty of having it ſpoke by a Lady, that has been the reigning toaſt for theſe twenty years, and yet never ſpoke a word in her life yet?

Poet. And if that is not a novelty, nothing is novelty!

Gen. It wou'd be trifling, to talk much of her beauty,——but her *influence* can make an aſs of *Apollo.*

Poet. But is not this one of your *jokes*, of the new cut? Have you really ſuch a Lady as this in your eye, for my ſervice?

Gen.

Gen. I have! and you will own, when you ſee her that I cou'd never have oblig'd you more kindly. Among a thouſand irreſiſtible fine qualities, ſhe has this choſen and conſtitutional love of *ſilence*, in the very genius, in the very eſſence of her character.

Poet. [*In a rapture.*] Heels! canes! claps! ſhouts third nights and tragic fire!
The *power!* the *power!* ſhe ſhakes my ſwelling breaſt;
And conſcious inſpiration bu-u-urſts, in rapture!
Go, ye ſoft-whiſp'ring gales! ye breezy thieves!
Steal, from *Arabia*'s flowers, the *ſipt* perfumes;
Then, to my charmer fly; kiſs her kind foot;
Form a ſoft cha-ri-ot, round her ſno-o-wy limbs:
And in the breath of vi'lets, wa-a-aft her, to me!

Gen. Admirably well *trod*, *pronounc'd*, and *divided!*—you *ſhall* ſee her.—But you need not be at the expence of ſtrains ſo pompous as theſe, to receive her. She has a generous and frank-hearted ſimplicity, that ſets her above ceremony.—She knows my deſign in your favour, and will hear my firſt ſummons to ſerve you. Breathe your wiſh and your meaning upon my wand here.

[*Waves her wand ſolemnly.*
Oh, thou, who ſcorning *voice*, hurleſt *eloquence*
From each light motion's flaſh! thought-lulling power!
To Britons' grave progenitors unknown:
But by their wiſer, french-taught, *ſons*, ador'd!
Oh! rais'd, on Fame's broad wings, above all *reach*
Of comic ſpleen's vain ſnarl, or tragic rage!
Deſcend, inſtructive, from thy throne of *air*.
Smile kind compaſſion o'er a convert's cauſe:
And teach deſpairing wit new arts to proſper.

A flying chariot deſcends, to the ſound of briſk muſic, wherein ſits Harlequin, *in a Dutch head-dreſs, and huge petticoat, without any gown. A fan in his hand.----He ſteps out, and comes forward; giving himſelf the airs of a maſculine, modiſh, Lady.----and ſtretching his neck, as if ſtruggling for voice, to addreſs himſelf to the audience.*

Gen.

Gen. [*After a pauſe.*] Mr. Fightfaſhion, how *like* you the Lady?

Poet. The *Lady!*--pray, by which of this French Lady's diviſions, is her ſex to be *reconnoitred* with moſt certainty?

Gen. O fie, Mr. Fightfaſhion! — fie!

Poet. May the *devil* (or, what is worſe, the *Genius of the ſtage*) run away with me, if, in the confuſion of motions, dreſſes, and taſtes, in our modern *Babel*, I don't find myſelf at a loſs ten times a day, to diſtinguiſh between a *man*, and a *woman!*

Gen. Remember *decorum*, Mr. Fightfaſhion!—Tragic poets ſhou'd keep ſenſe of *decorum!*

Poet. Why don't the Lady ſpeak?—ſhe ſhou'd not, methinks, *if a Lady*, be ſo hardly put to it to find the uſe of her *tongue.*

Gen. Ever, while you live, the more *ſtirring* the Lady, the more *ſtill* is her tongue, Mr. Fightfaſhion. And, beſides, it is the particular characteriſtic of *Mademoiſelle* to be *dumb.*

Poet. Dumb!--why, did'nt you tell me ſhe came hither to ſpeak in my favour?

Gen. Well, and what if I did tell you ſo?

Poet. Cons! my cauſe will be ſwimmingly carried, by the help of a *dumb* advocate!

Gen. Why, that is the one irreſiſtible fine quality, that, I told you, made the eſſence of her character.

Poet. I'll be hang'd if your plot was not to have *married* her to me! you inſiſt, with ſuch weight, on her *ſilence.*—Go, go, move off, Mrs. *Ebony*; make way for your betters. It is pity your Genius and you ſhou'd be parted. Go, ſweet maidens in moiety! be pleas'd to withdraw and repoſe yourſelves. There are cellars below, and dark rooms at your ſervice.—Or ſtay, now I think of it—ſince ambition loves riding.——

[*Knocks at the ſtage door.*

Here! you, Mr. Whatd'yecallum! Mr. Property-Keeper!——pray, ſend in an old woman, if you have any ſuch, with a broom-ſtick or two, to mount theſe dra-

dramatical witches —— Then, open your windows above, that Tragedy may'nt fall into your traps, while ſhe ſcreens her own lights with her handkerchief. —— And, now, you may let her come in, for the *Prologue.*—Hold, hold, fool! ſot! dolt! owl! that I am! — I have been ſo modiſhly benumbing my faculties, by converſing with theſe hermaphrodite deities, that I was within a hair's breadth of *forgetting* APOLLO.

[Genius *and* Harlequin *laugh and whiſper apart.*

Scene draws, and diſcovers the ſtatue of Apollo, *on a pedeſtal. In the one hand a golden harp; in the other a ſilver bow. —— The eyes of the image, and the beams round his head, tranſparent.*

Poet. There's a Deity for you! Shew me among all the numerous race of you, *Doubles*, that peſter the kingdom, one, that can bear looking at by the light of his own glory! —— There's Parnaſſus, at once, in her bold and unbrib'd repreſentative!—What are you two *mauls to bruiſe meaning*, laying your noddles together ſo cloſe for? Your owl's eyes, I ſuppoſe, are apt to *water*, when they look againſt ſun-beams? ——— Well! 'tis a very clean figure, i'faith! —— a true-touch'd, and exquiſite figure! —— Mr. What's-his-name's profeſſion and my own, are the two nobleſt of the three *ſiſter arts*. Not but they have, all, their reſpective good uſes; tho' detached and diſtinct from each other. —— Your *Poet*, for example, puts the world out of humour, by ſhewing them that their minds are more ugly than they ought to be. Your *Painter* ſets all this to rights again, by repreſenting their perſons a great deal handſomer than they are. ——— And then for your ſplenetic four ſouls, that have neither perſon nor mind to be pleas'd with, in comes the *Fidler*, and he ſets 'em a dancing —— and ſo they tranſpire away their tarantula's poiſon, and become wholſome enough to be taſted and ſpit out again.

Gen. Well: but I thought you ſaid you were about to begin?

Poet.

Poet. So we will—and pray mark well the Prologue;—Enter, enter.—It is to be ſpoken by Tragedy, crying:

Gen. Is that *ſhe*, Mr. Fightfaſhion? I ſee ſomebody betwixt the ſcenes, that looks *ſadly*.

Poet. Ay, marry! here comes a Lady, that looks *like* a Lady!——I'll warrant her *ſhe* can ſpeak, without choaking herſelf.

Enter Tragedy, *in black velvet, with a page holding her train. A wreath of bays in one hand, and handkerchief to her eyes in the other. She goes up to* Apollo *and kneels, in act of addreſſing the image.* Harlequin *trips wantonly after her; and amuſes himſelf with peeping and making faces at* Tragedy—*and menacing* Apollo, *with ridiculous poſtures, and paſſes of his wooden ſword, at a diſtance.*

Gen. Does this Lady repreſent *Tragedy*, Mr. Fightfaſhion?

Poet. Ay, that ſhe does---and does it quite *thorough*, too: and not like a *Paralitic*, that is lame o' one ſide of her.

Gen. And why, pray, does ſhe bring that uſeleſs dry reward of old wit along with her?

Poet. Why, you will ſee by and by, that thoſe bays are to be placed on *my* head, as ſoon as Apollo has pointed me out, as the Genius moſt diſtinguiſhed for Tragedy.

Gen. But what if Apollo ſhould ſerve you a trick---and give his voice for one of the play-houſe directors?

Poet. [*Laughing.*] Ha, ha, ha, ha---if he *ſhould*, and the elect had but wit enough to ſtand out, *ſo diſguiſed*, at his theatre, he would get an eſtate in a year or two, by the million, that would pay him raiſed prices, to gaze at the prodigy.

Gen. Ay but——

Poet. But me none of your buts.----E'gad! Mr. Jack and Jill, tack'd together! I wiſh, *you* were as dumb, as your friend *Ebony*.—Hold your peace, and interrupt us no more: but hear Tragedy ſpeak, like an angel.

Gen. Speak!---O, dreadful!---I hope you did not ſay *ſpeak*, Mr. Fightfaſhion!----If you can be dull enough to

permit her to *ſpeak*, I would not give this flirt of my fan for her influence.

Poet. ---Tragedy not SPEAK! ha, ha, ha,---- a *Genius!* a jack-daw. Tragedy not *ſpeak!*—— what! ſhe muſt *make mouths*, I ſuppoſe, with Madam *Ebony!*---and ſtretch out a long neck, like an over-cramm'd turkey!

Gen. Take my word,---if ſhe ſpeaks, ſhe will never be ſpoken of.

Poet. Why how the devil ſhould the paſſions be moved, without *ſpeaking?*

Gen. Oh! the *paſſions?*---what paſſions would you *wiſh* her to move, pray?

Poet. O! magic! magic! magic!---wooden ſwords! wooden heads! wooden management!---What a queſtion is *there*, for the *Genius of the ſtage*, now!---What will theſe horrible things end in?---*What paſſions muſt Tragedy move!*--Have I lived, to hear that miſerable queſtion!

Gen. The queſtion had much ſooner been anſwered than commented upon.

Poet. Why, *ſorrow*, ſhe muſt move: and *compaſſion.*

Gen. Then ſhe muſt *ſing*, Mr. Fightfaſhion: ſhe muſt *ſing.*

Poet. What!---SING, to move *ſorrow?*

Gen. Ay, ay, ay----ſhe muſt ſi-i-i-ing.---She muſt ſing, dolefully.---It is the demand of the mode, Mr. Fightfaſhion.

Poet. If I could hang myſelf, *honeſtly*,—that is, without running in debt for the rope—the ſin would be abſolved, by the force of the temptation.—Were I under a condemnation to live a few years longer, I ſhould run mad, at the abſurdities of this age!

Why was not I (ye Gods!) an *aſs?* an *owl?* —nay even an *Italian Eunuch?* any bird, fiſh, monſter, beaſt, but a POET?—What honeſt poor man in his wits, would write *ſenſe*, to ſuch a whimſical generation!

Gen. None, none, Mr. Fightfaſhion.—A man in his wits would write *ſound*—ſo-u-ound—ſo-u-u-u-u-u-u-ound!—Look'ye, notwithſtanding your Parnaſſian inflexibility, I will force you, before I have done, to ſtand bent, the right way,

way, to good fortune—Bring your Lady to *me*, when Apollo has done with her: ſhe ſhall be taught the *recitativo doloroſa* in a twinkling. She ſhall learn to hammer home a blunt ſentiment, by diviſional ſhakes and fierce nods of her head, in the true *time*, and *tone*, of ſignificance.

Poet. To confeſs a ſad truth, I had ſome thoughts of allowing her to *ſing*, a little.—So I gave her a ſhort, ſober, *ode*, that I wrote in due reverence of *Tragedy*—Beſides a merry *Scotch jig* for her ſiſter, that I have reſerved to trip up in the rear of her.

Gen. Clap 'em *together*, Mr. Fightfaſhion—clap 'em together.

Poet. How!—unite *oppoſites?* join manifeſt *contradictions?*

Gen. Think of a *man* and his *wife*, Mr. Fightfaſhion.—Tack 'em, tack 'em.——They'll draw like your high-prancing horſes; and attract but the more *notice*, by carrying their heads to the oppoſite quarters.

Poet. I can never come into it.--Such things may be done by a fool or a flatterer: but to a man of the leaſt *ſenſe*—

Gen. [*interrupting him.*] Death! freeze not me with *ſenſe*, who flame for ſong!

Am *I* the ſtage's Genius?—and ſhalt thou,
Dull Poet—prate of *ſenſe*, when I *diſclaim* it?

Poet. Nay, if it is come to that length——if war is openly *declared and proclaimed*, againſt wit,—I have done, Mrs. *Seam-i'-the-middle!* I have done.—— *Inter arma ſilent leges.*—Gadſo! I beg your pardon, I forgot myſelf; that was *Latin:* and I ought to have ſaid it in *French* or *Italian.*

Gen. Well! make me the ſong, tragi-comically.

Poet. Who? I!—if ever I make ſongs, in a fright, I'll put up for Poet-elect, to the *Opera.*

Gen. Suppoſe I ſhould make one, myſelf.—Are you for the *briſk* part? or the *lamentable?*

Poet. Oh, the lamentable part, or none, muſt be mine.---for it will grieve me to the very heart-ſtrings to ſing it.

Gen. Well! the *lamentable*, if you *can* but *velvet* it over with ſoftneſs, will be found no bad road to ſucceſs, man. ---Come, whet your dull, Engliſh, deſpondency.

[*Genius ſings.*]

1.

[*Set lightly.*] Wou'd a Lady make ſure of her lover,
Let Comedy light up her *ſmile:*
[*Set mournfully.*] Let Tragedy *mournfully* move her,
Ah! weeping crocodile!

2.

[*Light.*] By two ſuch extremes, ſhe'll *alarm* him,
She *laughs* the poor fool into hope.
[*Mournful.*] But, ah! ſhe's too wiſe to *un-charm* him:
So *frowns*-- and he *twirls*—in a rope!

Poet. Well done, Mrs. *Back-and-edge*! well done!---this is meant, I ſuppoſe, as a monitory example, of your late rule for tacking *Humour* to *Tragedy.*

Gen. Obſerve now: and ſing, after *me.*

Wou'd a Lady make ſure of her lover,
Let Comedy light up her *ſmile.*

[*Poet keeping dumb time, with his hand and his head, to the reſt, repeats only the laſt ſyllable.*

Poet. Smi-i-i-i---i-i-i-ile.

Gen. Well ſaid!---the genuine Italian, diviſion, in rudiment: only a little too courageouſly *angliciſed.*---At it again; take it, now, in the tragical key

Let Tragedy mournfully move her:
Ah! weeping crocodile!

Poet. Di--i--i -i--i--i--i--ile.

Gen. By two ſuch extremes, ſhe'll alarm him,
She laughs the poor fool into hope.

Poet. Ho--ho, ho, ho,--ho, ho, ho,--ope.

Gen. The next time you attempt that *Welch* fugue, don't, ſo boldly, indulge the unbridled *Britannic.* Not but your cloſe of the ſhake was extremely exotic, and happy! Now, mind the ſtrong fall, in the Tragical.

But ah! ſhe's too wiſe to un-charm him:
So frowns--- and he *twirls*, in a rope.

Poet. Ro--o, o, o,--o, o, o,--ope.

[*Ending the notes in a laugh.*

Ha,

Ha, ha, ha, ha,—dangle, dangle, dangle.—Well, that pendulous *twirl* was a maſterpiece! the very natural and juſt image of *hanging*! E'gad, when you talk'd of your high-prancing man and his wife, I fore-ſaw this cataſtrophe.---It was the moſt probable conſequence in the world, of your *marrying* a couple of *contraries*.

Gen. See there, then! let her imitate my manner: and ſhe will have a chance among the reſt to grow *taking*.

Poet. The devil take *me*, if I do.—Imitate THY manner! I would as ſoon ſollicit a *Critic*, for his ſubſcription to a panegyric upon *Pantomime*.—Come, come, I'll have no more of your light interruptions. As far as a *note*, now and then, I may take your opinion: for, ſeaſon even a *ſong* with the true *Attic ſalt*, and it may be *preſerved* from corrupting the *Drama*.

Madam, majeſtic Madam!—raiſe your venerable foot, and ſtalk forward. We will make it our boaſt, to charm the reaſonable, with reaſon. [*Comes cloſe to her, and ſpeaks what follows in her ear.*

However, at preſent, we will purſue that bold purpoſe no farther, I think, than the *ſong*. Keep your ſenſe in reſerve, till a better opportunity. [*As* Tragedy *comes forward*, Harlequin *dances whimſically behind her.*

Gen. Mark the end of this Lady. Mr Fightfaſhion.

Poet. Never trouble yourſelf about *her* end, Mrs. Double-bottom: you have got two of your own to take care of.—Proceed, ſolemn power! proceed.—Sound the Tragical trumpet, within, there.-- [*Trumpet ſounds behind the ſcenes.*

Bravo, bravo!—Now the overture being over, you may *begin*, with Dramatic propriety.

Tragedy. [*Pointing to her mouth.*] Aw, aw, aw--aw, aw!

Poet. [*In a ſurprize.*] Aw, aw, aw, aw?---Who the Devil will take that for Tragedy?

Tragedy. [*Weeping.*] Aw, aw, aw,---aw, aw---

Gen. [*Laughing.*] Alas, alas! poor Tragedy!—why, your paſſion-ſtirring Lady is ſtruck dumb, Mr Fightfaſhion!

Poet. What an unfortunate poor devil am I! may I be condemned to write nonſenſe, and *ſing* it, myſelf, for ſubſiſtence, if I have not dreaded ſome ſuch accident, theſe twenty years! I ſaw it daily coming nearer and nearer. She has, ſeaſon after ſeaſon, been loſing her voice. Rarely able, of late, to ſpeak ſenſe, above three days together.—Dear *Venus, and Mars, in conjunction,* help me out, if thou haſt the leaſt grain of good nature.—Though I know you can miſs better marks, yet I dare ſwear you can ſhoot a ſong, flying.—

Gen. Will you conform then? will you ſteer by the wholſome advices I give you?

Poet. Elſe, may the Gods, who frown on wit——

Gen. Hold, hold.—Only reach me the *ſong*: I remit you the rapture.

[*Reads it to herſelf.*] It is *grave* enough, I perceive, to be once heard, and forgotten.

[*Beckons Harlequin.*] Lunnikin!—call up a ſpirit, that has *courage* enough to do gravity juſtice.—Fleſh and blood are too frail to dare hazard it.

Harlequin *making ſigns of invocation, there ariſes a ſpirit, like* Pallas, *with ſpear, ſhield, and helmet: and ſings the following air, to a trumpet. The Poet, on one ſide, keeps time in grave, rapturous, geſture. And* Harlequin, *on the other, with mimic, and ridiculous action.*

1.

Tragic Muſe, thou Queen of paſſion!
Weep, and wind the melting heart:
Húſh the rage of joy, and faſhion,
Thought and reaſon gain, by *ſmart*.

2.

Let the ſoul, that wakes to hear thee,
Sorrow's ſoft'ning power embrace:
Love and glory triumph, near thee;
Tears of pity ſhine with grace.

3. When

3.

When the breaking heart, in anguiſh,
Feels the pleaſing pain, too deep;
Cupids crown you, while you languiſh:
And, for laſting *joy*, you weep. [*Spirit deſcends.*

Poet. More and more *bravo!* Look you there, *Goody Two-fold!* we muſt imitate *your* way, to be *taking?* A plague on all *Vanity*, I ſay!—Your way was a fine way, truly!

Gen. It is an unaccountable truth, that though your *Poet* is a profeſſor of wit, he's a *fool*, as it were by inſpiration!—Suppoſe Madam *aw*, *aw*, *aw*, ſhould recover the uſe of her tongue, for a night or two, how long would that licence continue? how well would ſhe ſupport *ancient taſte*, do you think?

Poet. How the devil ſhould *I* know; as things ſtand in this wiſe generation?

Gen. Meaſure it for him, Lunkin: meaſure it for him.

Harlequin *ſkips wantonly up to* Tragedy, *and planting himſelf behind, blows her down with the wind of his fan. She ſinks through a long trap: and her page is, by a ſtroke of* Harlequin's *ſword, transformed into a monkey; and runs off angry, and chattering. The Poet in aſtoniſhment looking every way about him, runs at laſt to the open trap, and feels after* Tragedy *with his foot; as hardly believing ſhe could vaniſh ſo ſuddenly.*

Gen. Ha, ha, ha, ha, how diſcerning a grave Author's taſte is! She's gone, with a jirk, Mr. Fightfaſhion. She is vaniſhed like the flame of a *Poet*, that had promiſed himſelf the paper life of a *Virgil!*

Poet. Death! Fire! Dance! Opera! Cat-call! Hiſs! and Furies!——But you will plead your confounded *petticoats:* and ſo it ſignifies nothing to be angry. Write *Tragedy!*—Aye,—let them do it, who can wait for a repreſentation till the middle of next century. Well, to confeſs the plain truth, I did not altogether depend on

her. I have her ſiſter, drawn up in reſerve. Cutting *Comedy* ſhall renew the charge, triumphantly. She'll recover the loſt field, I'll warrant her.—Though, by the bye, this robuſt, dumb, black gentlewoman of your acquaintance, has a very particular way of conferring her obligations.

Enter Comedy *with a prim ſmile; dreſſed like a little old dame, of Queen* Elizabeth's *days, in a ruff, and the whole habit of thoſe times, as far as to the middle---but with modiſh French hoop,---pinn'd up tail, &c.---The modern part of her dreſs of one colour: the ancient of another.*

Gen. What! is this a little piece of a Lady all you can afford us, for *Comedy*, Mr. Fightfaſhion?

Poet. If her ſize does not pleaſe you, thank the meaſure of the times.—I but took her as I found her. She was once, they ſay, as tall as a may-pole: but what won't bad uſage diminiſh?—She catched cold, at a thin, yawning audience, was too poor to find fees for the doctors; ſo fell into a conſumption, and ſhrunk into theſe pigmy dimenſions. But pray, no more jokes at her ſtature. 'Tis the ſcantling in mode for a *Beau:* and ſure! it may ſerve for a *Lady!*

Gen. Never doubt it. She would have *ſize* enough *to* ſuit the height of her *influence*, though ſhe were as ſhort as your foreſight, Mr. Fightfaſhion.

Poet. Foreſight? Egad, this will do it, or nothing will do't. Do but note her dramatical countenance! She has an *eye*, Mrs. Motley, that could *ſpeak*, though her tongue were ſilent as *Ebony's*. Not that ſhe wants tongue, neither.—I aſſure you ſhe has all, that belongs to her, in the moſt ſovereign perfection. Pleaſe to trip a little forwarder, ſprightly Madam—Halt, halt, halt! and know when you are poſted exactly.---Liſten *Genius!* liſten *Ebony!*

While Comedy *opens her mouth as preparing to ſpeak*, Harlequin *ſeals it up with the flat of his wooden ſword*;---

upon

upon which she laughs, and makes faces; and falls into a series of somersets and tumblings.

Gen. What means this second disappointment, Mr. Fightfashion? Ha, ha, ha, ha, you have a politician's bad luck, at *expedients*.

Poet. [*Astonished.*] To be sure some leaden planet, that has got a damn'd fool of a manager for its intelligence, has been shedding its influence upon *wit*, to the utter disgrace of good purposes! — What a comfortable revolution in taste are we Poets to look for, when Tragedy is struck sullenly dumb; and Comedy tumbles, grins, and makes faces?

Gen. And to whom should you apply for relief in such cases, but to the *Genius of the stage*, Mr. Fightfashion?

Poet. If I could find a wish'd Genius in places more proper, I should know how to despise that necessity.

Gen. What! you think wit is lost, on the *stage*, then?

Poet. In good faith, I have lost a conceit, that was built on that fancy.— Had not Comedy been bewitched, in the nick, and fallen into these freakish convulsions, she was to have made *hue and cry* after wit: and proposed to give a reward, for discovering it.

Gen. The town cryer, methinks, might serve as well (for that part) as *Comedy*.

Poet. Oh! the rogue is too hoarse, and too masculine. Such an unsoftened singer as *he* might overlay the attention of our Ladies of taste; and corrupt their tender ears with a *coarseness*, that has hitherto got no higher than into their *stride*, and their *elbows*.

Gen. Give me the song. I have *spirits* at my call, who, being made of *all air*, may serve as a eunuch, for singing.

Poet. Better, better; for those gross, walking, air-pipes are too big, you must know, for my *jest*; and would dissolve half the salt of my satire.

Gen. I will call up a spirit, *in twelves*, that is seldom overbusied below-ground: being a kind of supernumerary carrier, by whom *Pluto* sends back goods, he has no right to detain in his custody. The loads are but light ones:

and

and the porter himſelf little bigger than a Turkiſh poſt-pigeon.

Poet. Loads! what loads can ſo tiny a porter be capable of bringing, ſo far up hill, without danger of overcharging his ſhoulders?

Gen. Why, the good fortune of *an honeſt man's family* ſeldom hazards the breaking his back. But the burthen he bears with moſt *eaſe*, is the ſurplus of a *courtier's ſincerity*.—Lunniky,—ſhew Mr. Fightfaſhion the ſize of him.

Harlequin *ſtamps, and makes a flouriſh or two with his ſword, upon which, there riſes a ſpirit in the form of a little bellman, with a round-headed ſtaff, bell, and lanthorn.*

Spirit. [*After ringing his bell.*] O yes! be it known, to the world far and nigh,
That *Wit* has *elop'd*: and I'm ſent, hue and cry,
To offer a groat, in reward, from the high.
If any the loſs of this jade can ſupply,
He ſhould let it alone, ſay I. [*Rings his bell.*
O yes! hear the *marks* of this runaway *tit*;
The mare of the Muſes is broke from her bit;
Lean, ragged, and old,—and her name it was WIT.
If any can catch this runaway mare,
His pains ſhall reward his care. [*Rings his bell.*
Her coat was worn out, and her belly pinch'd in.
Her outſide was proof ſhe had no fleſh within:
But bones ſhe had ſtore—for they peep'd thro' her ſkin.
Whate'er happy man has our runaway caught,
Let him go to *my Lord*, and he'll *owe* him the *groat*.
[*Rings his bell.*
Do nothing in vain: therefore ſeek not the *ſtray*,
In *markets* for ſelling ha, ha, ha, ha, *hay*:
Nor ſtop at the *Harlequin halls* in your way.
For why ſhould you loſe your time and pains,
And take the *wrong horſe* by the reins? [*Rings his bell.*
But if in the *city* to ſearch you think fit,
The *bank* is the place, where you're ſureſt to hit;
For they that keep *money* can never want *wit*.

Then,

Then, there, you the loſs may beſt ſupply.
So, God bleſs the King, and good-b'wye.
[*Rings his bell, and deſcends ringing it.*

Poet. Caro! bello! dolce! aye egad! and, *picquante!* There's for you, Mrs. Twyford! there's applauſe, in the language of the times, now!

Gen. But, did you really expect that Mrs. *Comedy* in abridgment here would have had influence to recommend you to the regard of the public?

Poet. It were a pretty revolution in taſte, faith! if, in a polite land like ours, neither *Tragedy*, nor *Comedy*, ſhould find friends enough to keep 'em in countenance; among *taperers, tune-twirlers, and tumblers.*

Gen. Shall I ſhew you the event of this Lady's predeſtined good fortune?

Poet. Do your worſt: for I begin to perceive my own ignorance.—

Gen. Set her right, Lunny.—tranſpoſe and correct her.

Harlequin *ſnatches off his head-cloaths, and throws 'em in* Comedy's *face: upon which ſhe ſtaggers, falls down, and ſinks through a trap, with her heels turned upward.*

Poet. [*Laughing immoderately.*] Ha, ha, ha, ha,—— ha, ha, ha ——

Gen. O, brave Mr. Fightfaſhion! you carry the whole world before you!

Poet. [*Laughing again.*] Ha, ha, ha, ha,—— ha, ha, ha.—At this impudent arch joke, of *Ebony's*, I cannot find in my heart to be angry.—There's a *meaning* in the dirty rogue's wit, that atones for the ſting of his malice.—Beſides, the jeſt is much ſmarter upon other folks than upon *me.*—I am ſure, it is none of *my* fault, that the *wrong end* of *Comedy* is turned uppermoſt.

Gen. But, ſince it is ſo, change taſte and take good counſel.

Poet. [*Growing graver.*] Is it really then, and unavoidably, to be thus? Have the Muſes loſt their power, in the theatres?—And is a Poet to be *nobody*, by their influence.

Gen. No, not ſo much as a jack-ſtraw.—Not half ſo much as a jack-pudding.

Poet.

Poet. O, dark degenerate age!—O, barbarous town
O, balls! aſſemblies! opera! times! and taſtes!
What have I lived to *ſee!*

[*Throws his perriwig on the ground in a rage*

Now were I *maudlin*, I ſhould *cry*, in blank verſe.—Nay I begin to feel a few tears drop already.—— I ſhall inven advice in a moment.—Inſtead of ſinging to move ſorrow my ſorrow, I find, will move ſinging.

[*Sings, half ſpeaking, and half ſobbing*

Oh, day of woe for wit! wit's woeful day!
Senſe gets nor praiſe, nor money.
Down, *head*---'tis heels, heels, heels, now write the play
Dance, dance, good maſter *Lunny.* [*Capers three times at the words* heels: *and dances, as he ſings the laſt line*

Genius. [*Returning his perriwig.*] Be comforted, Mr. Fightfaſhion, be comforted. Times were never ſo bad but they were capable of mending. Were you penitent, inſtead of melancholy, were you inclinable to forſake the idolatry of your forefathers,---to renounce thoſe barren old maids you call Muſes;---and worſhip the true *Apollo* of the times, your caſe is not ſo deſperate, but that means might be found to relieve you.

Poet. You have me then, you have me——whoo! whoop! what care I (who can *jump*) for the Muſes?—— Look at that pretty girl, dreſſed in blue, above, there, in yon kiſſing corner of the gallery---*ſhe* has more influence over mankind, then *all nine* of them.—Egad, I am reſolved to grow frugal, and ſave the needleſs expence of much *thinking.*—Don't talk to me any more of my melancholy: but rejoice in my ſpirit of penitence.—Rhime ſhall ſhew you my reaſon, *extempore.*

Half ſpeaks, and half ſings, the following lines, with a capering vivacity of motion and geſture.

I.

When awaking I ſee,
A new road to eſteem,
What an aſs ſhou'd I be,
To err on, in my dream!

2.

No.—I'll riſe, by degrees,
To be emptily gay:
And aſpiring, to pleaſe,
Throw my *meaning* away.

Gen. Aye! that *will* do, Mr. Fightfaſhion, that *will* do. You ſhall ſupplicate *our* Apollo, in an inſtant.—— But, firſt, as your brother Bays expreſſes it, *let's have a dance.*——Help us out, *Ebony.*---Becauſe we are friends, I adopt your own phraſe, Mr. Fightfaſhion.

Poet. Hark ye!---cou'd'nt I, by *your* intereſt, under pretence of the new eſtate to fall to me by this change in my taſte, get an authority for change of my *name* too? Methinks, *Lightfaſhion* would ſound civiller than *Fightfaſhion*, for a man, who is to appear in good company.

Gen. It ſhall be done. Say no more; it ſhall be done.--I have ſome friends, in a ſituation to ſerve you; who having very bad names, of their own, will be obliged to you for this hint, and get 'em changed into better.---But, come, let us attend to the dance.

Harlequin *ſlips off his hoop petticoat; and, placing it over a trap, makes mimical circles with his ſword; then comes up to the Poet, and holds out his hand, with a demand, in dumb ſhow.*

Poet. What would *Pelican* have? noble Genius!

Gen. He ſcents ſomething, I am afraid, in a poetical pocket, that he ſtands in need of, for raiſing the devil.

Poet. Says he ſo? ſays he ſo?---Egad! and I can fit him, to a hair.—There, take it.—'Tis my *purſe:* and as *empty*, as thy mouth, *Ebony.*—It is in the condition of an old maid, of ſome threeſcore and ten; gone to ruin by *lying bye*; and not worn out by *uſing*, I give thee my word on't.—A ſilly country couſin of mine, took it into her head to ſend it me up for a *fairing!* the poor girl meant it ſeriouſly: for ſhe knew nothing at all of the world. So, I could not, you know, take it *ill* of her.—But, it

was

was a token quite out of *my* way!—She might as we have made me a preſent of her *ſampler.*

[Harlequin *rejects the purſe, with a ſhake of his hea*

What? It won't do, then?—to tell you the plain truth I thought ſo. The devil knows how to chuſe better. H underſtands empty purſes too well to be gulled by them Well—I can't help it, honeſt *Ebony.* We Poets, tho ſee'ſt, are but ſcanty ſuppliers of materials to *charm* witha

Gen. Have you no new *Ode?* no *Panegyrick?* or cop of *verſes*, to give him?

Poet. Aye!—with all my heart.—If the devil loves *poetry* I can give him his doſe of it. Is it *ſo*, then?—is it *ſo?* I ſee t what part of the world *good Taſte* has been travelling!—They ſay, indeed, that he picks virtues away from us as faſt as he can.—Phœbus knows how long we ma continue rich enough to ſupply him with any!

Here, here——if poetry will pleaſe him, I have *ſmall* quantity, at his ſervice. [*Draws a huge parc out of his pocket, as much as he can poſſibly graſp*

Stay, let me read thee a few of the *titles*: for, a greedy a devourer as cloven-foot, thy brother Ebony, i reported to be, he may be too dainty, I am afraid, fo ſome things, that go down well enough in other places.

[*Reads.*] *A Dedication, to the right honourable the Lor*

——What! I ſuppoſe, by that four ſhake of you head, you muſt have ſomething more ſound and ſubſtantial? Nay, to do but mere juſtice to truth, if it were not for the *lyes* we can *lard* with, dedication is a very *dry meal:* and too hard for the devil's *digeſtion.*

[*Reads another.*] *An Ode, on the triumph of Taſte, in Grea Britain.* Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha——The rogue ſhakes his ears at the ſound of it, as if he wou'd throw 'em in my face——That was only a BITE, Ebony!——I read what was *not there*, on purpoſe to provoke thee.

[*Reads a third.*] *An eſſay, on the ſlow, but poſſible reſtoration of wit, and future influence of virtue, in theſe kingdoms.*

[Harlequin *ſnatches it out of his hand.*

O, ho!

O, ho!——It is well, I have *ſomething*, at laſt, that will go down with you.

Harlequin *tripping once or twice round the petticoat, throws the paper into the hollow of it: whence immediately flaſhes a flame.——After which, there come up, through the hoop, firſt, the figure of* TRUTH, *quick and boldly; then of* TIME, *ſlow and heavily.*

Poet. How now! what ſtrange figures are theſe?

Gen. TRUTH, and TIME, Mr. Fightfaſhion. Mind the dance, mind the dance——It will comfort you.

[*The dance of* Truth *and* Time, *is as follows.*

Truth *is dreſſed in a fleſh-colour'd canvas, repreſenting the figure of a woman quite naked, except ſkirts of white ſilk. Her hair looſe, hanging down to the bottom of her back. A beautiful maſk hides its edges, under her hair. On her breaſt is a ſilver ſun, broad and beamy. In her hand, a round looking-glaſs, with a long handle.*

The dreſs of Time *is in canvas of a ſallower colour, and appearing ſhrivell'd and wrinkly. His ſkirts are of black bays. His hair is a long lock before, but he is quite bald behind. He has a ſcythe in his right hand; and in his left hand an hour-glaſs.*

Truth *leaps up, through and over the petticoat:* Time *creeps out under it.*

Truth *advances in light and ſwift meaſures, toward* Harlequin: *expreſſing rage and contempt, and pointing at her glaſs, as deſirous to ſhew him his true figure in it.*

Time *is long in crawling out; often ſtopping to look toward them; and ſhaking his head, at a diſtance.*

Here the meaſure becomes graver, and more ſlow, and Truth, *being met boldly by* Harlequin, *preſents her glaſs at him: who, inſtead of ſeeming aſham'd of the figure he makes in it, ſurveys himſelf with pleaſure and rapture; examines his perſon all round, ſets his face, rubs his teeth, combs, bruſhes, twirls, dances, and gives himſelf all the fop airs of a beau at his dreſſing glaſs.*

Time,

Time, *at length, diſengaging himſelf, limps along; two o three heavy and ſlow ſteps, and then halts, and pants; the goes on a few more ſuch ſteps, directing his way round th ſides of the ſtage; expreſſing earneſt deſire to ſurpriz* Harlequin, *and often ſhaking his ſcythe, and his hour glaſs at him, and ſtamping, impatiently, with loud an ſtrong beats of his feet, to the time of the muſic.*

All theſe motions are accompanied and directed by correſpon dent halts, ſlow meaſures, and breaks in the muſic.

The notes, now, become quicker again; and Harlequin *ſpit ting upon the glaſs, turns his back upon* Truth: *who, pro vok'd by the contempt, ſtrikes him with her glaſs, as he i ſkipping away from her. Upon that, he turns, and attacks her antickly, with his wooden ſword; and proving nimbleſt in the ſteps of the dance, ſurrounds, overcomes, and takes her priſoner; making her kneel before him, with her hands ty'd behind her—while he dances round, and inſults her in that mortifying poſture.*

The tune ſuddenly changing into the ſolemn and melancholy, Time *redoubles his ſigns of impatience, and getting near enough to reach* Truth *with the point of his ſcythe, cuts the ſtring ſhe was ty'd by: — whereupon ſhe ſtarts up, receives the ſcythe into her own hands, and mowing (in meaſure) at* Harlequin, *now on one ſide of the ſtage, now on the other, he tumbles heels over head; and, at laſt, rolls off in great fright and diſorder.* ———

The muſic, then, riſes to triumph: and the figures of Truth *and* Time *dance out, hand in hand, in purſuit of the runaway.*

Poet. Methinks, there is ſomething that looks *ominous* in this allegory.---Theſe two children of Ebony's, like *Sin* and *Death*, in the *Paradiſe loſt*, ſeem to threaten the deſtruction of their parent.

Gen. Let *hereafter* be left to itſelf.—— Many changes will happen in the world, in whoſe good, or whoſe evil, *you* will claim no ſhare, Mr. *Lightfaſhion.*—— OUR *Apollo* will be the reigning Apollo, for your life at leaſt: and that

that is enough to intitle him to your worſhip.——Stand ſtill, and attend with due reverence the invocation I am about to make for you.

Poet. *You* don't intend magic too, I hope.

Gen. Fear nothing: or but fear, for your *Phœbus.*

Waves her wand, and a ſpirit, robed in black, ariſes and ſings.

Grecian idol!——Vain Apollo!
Go---be gone---you reign no longer.
We'll a ſprightlier *Phœbus* follow,
Happier, more belov'd, and younger:
Go---be gone---you reign no longer.

In ſinging the word be gone, *in the laſt line, at a ſtamp of the foot, a peal of thunder is heard; at which the eyes and rays of* Apollo *are ſuddenly darkened. His bow and harp fall out of his hands; and the image ſinks down out of ſight.*--Harlequin *appears ſitting in his place, with a conjuring wand in one hand, and a* fool's cap *in the other.*

Poet. How horrible is this!

Gen. Be dumb.--Bend, bend. Approach with humble awe: Kneel here — and proſper.

Poet, led up by the Genius, kneels before Harlequin, *who offers him his toe to be kiſſed: then, nodding propitious, delivers the wand into his hand; and crowns him with the fool's cap: with which, in high rapture, the Poet returns toward the Genius.*

Poet. [*Pointing to his cap.*] 'Tis *mine!*——The great, the myſtic *gift*, is *mine!*

Gen. Aye----but don't, in your rapture, forget what might be proper to ſay to an audience, now you are brought within proſpect of getting one.

Poet. Come you forward, along with your new convert; and keep a baſhful beginner in countenance.

[*Genius and Poet come forward, and ſpeak (not* ſing) *what follows.*

1.

Gen. O, ye Ladies, and Gentlemen, all!
Mark the *Poet*; and lend him an ear:
Our Apollo has ſent him a *call*;
That will eaſe the gay world of their fear.

2.

Now, if e'er he offends, any more,
By writings, too grave, to be read;
Then, this new-faſhion'd *bays*, which he wore,
Will deſerve to be nail'd to his head.

Poet. Let 'em laugh;---'tis my purpoſe to *win*,
Tho' they dreſs Mr. *Bays*, like an *aſs*,
They may find, if they chance to peep in,
There's *a Snake in the* POET's *graſs*.

ALZIRA:

OR,

Spaniſh INSULT Repented.

A

TRAGEDY.

Acted at the

THEATRE-ROYAL

IN

DRURY-LANE.

M DCC XLIV.

TO

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

FREDERIC

PRINCE of *WALES*,

SIR,

THO' a Prince is *born* a Patron, yet the benevolent diſpoſition of his heart gives a nobler title to the *homage of the Arts*, than all the greatneſs of his power, to protect them.——Their RESPECT is (either way) ſo much your Royal Highneſs's unqueſtion'd *due*, that he, who *aſks your leave* to offer it, calls in *queſtion* your prerogative; or means to *ſell* his acknowledgments.

They have not marked, with penetration, the diſtinction of your ſpirit, who dare look upon you as *incloſed* againſt the acceſs of *ſincerity*. The judgment and humanity of Princes are *obſcured*, by too much difficulty in approaching them. Nor *can* the benefactors of mankind be ſo far inconſiſtent with themſelves, as to interpoſe the obſtacles of diſtance, or cold ceremony, between their goodneſs, and our gratitude.

It were indeed, ſome violation of the *laſt*, not to devote ALZIRA to the hand, that honoured her, in public, with an applauſe ſo warm, and weighty, at her firſt appearance on the *Engliſh* theatre.——When tragedies are ſtrong in *ſentiment*, they will be *touchſtones* to the hearers *hearts*. The narrow, and inhumane, will be unattentive, or unmoved: while Princely ſpirits like your Royal Highneſs's, (impelled by their own conſcious tendency) ſhew an example, in their generous ſenſibility, how *great thoughts* are *received*, by thoſe, who can *think greatly*.

Your Royal Highneſs, ſo *perſiſting* to keep reaſon and nature in countenance at the Theatres, would univerſally *eſtabliſh*, what you ſo openly *avow*. For, if where men *love*, they *imitate*, YOUR example will be *copied*, by ſo many millions, that the influence of your attraction muſt ſoon plant your taſte, and overſpread THREE kingdoms with *your* laurels.

It may at preſent be a *fruitleſs*, but it can never be an *irrational* wiſh, that a Theatre intirely *new*, (if not rather the old ones, *new-modelled*) profeſſing only what is *ſerious* and *manly*, and made ſacred to the intereſts of *wiſdom* and *virtue*, might ariſe, under ſome powerful and popular protection. —To what lengths of improvement would not ſuch a *ſpur* provoke *genius!* —Or, ſhould it *fail* to do that, it wou'd make manifeſt, at leaſt, that rather *wit* is wanting, than *encouragement:* and, that theſe opprobrious *excreſcences* of our Stage, which, under the diſguiſe of *entertainments*, have defamed, and inſulted a *people*, had a meaner *derivation*, than from the hope of delighting our *Princes*.

It has been a misfortune to poetry, in this nation, that it was too ſupercilioufly *under-rated*; and, (to acknowledge the truth, on both ſides) for the moſt part, *practiſed too lightly*. —But, by thoſe who conſider it according to the demand of its character, it will be found intitled, beyond many other arts, to the political affection of Princes: For, as the great Sir *Francis Bacon* has remarked, while Hiſtory but *waits on* Fortune, with too ſervile a reſtriction, Poetry *corrects* and *commands* her: —Becauſe, rectifying the obliquity of *natural* events, by a more equitable formation of *rational* ones, the Poet, inſtead of conſtraining the mind to *ſucceſſes*, adapts, and calls out *events*, to the meaſures of *reaſon* and *virtue*; maintaining Providence triumphant, againſt the oppoſitions of *nature*, and *accident*.

Dramatic poetry, in this bold purpoſe, acts with moſt *immediate*, and *manifeſt* conſequence; becauſe, aſſembling together all, that *animates*, *invites*, or *enforces*, it works, with

with incredible influence, upon the paſſions of a people, after they have been refined, and *induced* to its reliſh. —— It does this, in ſo confeſs'd a *degree*, that our great philoſopher, above-named, beautifully calls it the bow of the mind: as if he had ſaid, The *Stage* is an inſtrument in the hands of the *Poet*, as capable of giving *modulation* and *tone* to the HEART; as the *bow* to the VIOLIN, in the hand of a *muſician*.

There is *another* advantage in poetry, which ſtill further intitles it to the protection of Princes, who are lovers (like your Royal Highneſs) of ages which are only to *bear of* them. —— Other arts have ſome *ſingle*, and *limited effect*: but the creations of *poetry* have a power to *multiply their ſpecies*, in new and emulative *ſucceſſions* of virtue, and heroiſm: the SEEDS, as it were, of thoſe paſſions, which produce noble qualities, being *ſown* in all poems of genius.

If ſuch deſirable effects are, now, leſs common than anciently, it is only where a *tuneful emptineſs* is miſtaken for *poetry*; and, a *calm*, *cold*, ſenſe, conveyed in *unpaſſionate metre*: whereas poetry has no element, but PASSION; and therefore, rhyme, turn, meaſure, are but fruitleſs *affectations*, where a SPIRIT is not found, that gives the *heat*, and the *enthuſiaſm*; —— the poet, to ſay all in a word, who can be read, without excitement of emotions in the heart, having been, *buſily*, *loſing his pains*; like a ſmith, who would faſhion *cold* iron. —— He may have the regular *return*, in the deſcent of the ſtrokes; —— the inſignificant *jingle*, in the ring of the ſound; —— and the hammering *delight* in the labour: —— but, he has neither the *penetration*, the *glow*; —— nor the *ſparkling*.

When, in ſome unbending moment, your Royal Highneſs ſhall reflect, perhaps, on the moſt likely meaſures, for diminiſhing our *pretences* to poetry, yet augmenting its *eſſential growth*, how kind would Heaven be to the legitimate friends of the *Muſes*, ſhould it, at that time, whiſper in your ear, that *no art ever flouriſhed* (in Monarchies) *till the favour of the* Court *made it* faſhionable?

On my own part, I have little to ſay, worth the h
nour of your notice on this ſubject; being no more th
an *humble ſolicitor*, for an event I have nothing to ho
from. Not that I preſume to repreſent myſelf as t
ſtoical *to feel* the advantage of *diſtinction*. I am only *t*
buſy, to be diſpoſed for purſuing it: having *renounced* t
world, without *quitting* it; that, *ſtanding aſide* in an u
crowded corner, I might eſcape being hurried along i
the duſt of the *ſhow*; and quietly ſee, and conſider, *t*
whole, as it paſſes: inſtead of acting *a part in it*; and tha
perhaps, but a *poor* one.

In a ſituation, ſo calm, and untroubled, there ariſes
ſalutary habitude, of ſuppoſing DISTINCTION to b
lodged in the *mind*;—and AMBITION, in the *uſe*, and *com*
mand, of the faculties. —— Such a choice may be *ſilent*
but it is not *unactive*. ——— Nay, I am afraid, he wh
makes it, is but a concealed kind of EPICURE; notwith
ſtanding his pretences to *forbearance*, and *philoſophy*
For, while he partakes, in full reliſh, all the inſelt *enjoy*
ments of life, he throws nothing of it away, but its *falſe*
face, and its *prejudices*.—He takes care to live *at peace*,
in the very center of *malice*, and *faction:* for, viewing
greatneſs, *without hope*, he views it, alſo, *without envy*.

Upon the whole, tho' there may be a ſuſpicion of
ſomething too *ſelfiſh*, in this *perſonal* ſyſtem of *liberty*, it
will ſee a man, in a moment, from all thoſe *byaſſing*
partialites, which hang their dead weight upon *judgment*;
and leave him, as *diſintereſted* a ſpectator of the virtues,
or vices, of *cotemporary greatneſs*, as of that, which hiſ-
tory has tranſmitted to him, from times he had nothing
to do with.—I am, therefore, *ſure it is* NO FLATTERY,
when I congratulate your Royal Highneſs, on the hu-
mane glories of your *future* reign, and thank you for a
thouſand bleſſings, *I expect not to partake of*.

I am, with a profound reſpect, Sir,
Your ROYAL HIGHNESS's,
Moſt obedient, and moſt humble ſervant,
A. HILL.

PROLOGUE.

Spoken by Mr. JOHNSON,

WHEN cold tranſlation clings to copied thought,
And freedom ſtoops to ſteal, what ſlavery wrote,
Such pilf'ring poets, for their name unfit,
Are traitors: and renounce their country's wit.
From a French *ſpring, tho', firſt* Alzira *drew,*
Her ſtream runs Engliſh, *now, and flows for you.*
Rich Britain *borrows, but with generous end:*
Whate'er ſhe takes from France, *ſhe takes to* mend.
Not that the French *want fire—but waſte its rage:*
Rant *in the field—— to* ſleep *upon the ſtage.*
French *wit is like* French *politics—fine drawn:*
But thin, and flimſey — a mere cobweb lawn.
England *weaves ſlow, but ſtrong —— with doubtful head—*
Hangs o'er the ſhuttle — but ſtrikes home the thread.
Rouſe her loſt Muſe —— re-wake her ſlumb'ring ſcene,
Teach ſhew, to animate —— *and ſound, to* mean.
Now, while, ſlow-drawn, your dreaded ſwords *prevail,*
And Commerce, *'ſpite of envy, ſpreads her ſail;*
Stoop not to forfeit Wit's *all bright'ning claim:*
Arms, Trade, *and* Pen *ſhould guard the* Conqu'ror's *fame.*
Taſte, for your ſelves.—Be All French *Power diſdain'd!*
Not ev'n a ſlave, will bear his fancy chain'd.
Off with their fripp'ry modes: *Their Kings, in vain,*
Attempt you. —— Shall their cooks, and tailors, reign?
Croſs 'em —— in dreſs, taſte, treaties, arms — and dance.
Scorn, ev'n a ſtep, that leaves the lead, to France.
Smile, at the pride their light ſtage-caperer feels!
Firm-ſtanding Britons *need no flying heels.*
Bleſt iſle! while every groaning nation, round,
Bends to the ſervile yoke, ignobly bound!
Thou! from their confines, and their mis'ries, rent,
Safe, ſea-ſet gem! thy own great continent!

Shew'ſt

Shew'ſt a tame, truckling world, one gen'rous land,
Where power ne'er proſper'd,—in a tyrant's *hand!*
To-night, new ſtars, that gild an alien pole,
Flame from the ſouth, with free-born fire of ſoul.
Gems, from Peru, *rarer than gold we bring:*
A people, ſav'd from ſlav'ry —— by their King!
Rome's *bloody ſword-knot, by church ribbands tied:*
And zeal, and depredation, cloſe allied!
Inſult reveng'd, by freedom's broken chain:
Repuls'd ambition —— and corrected Spain.
Lend your brave hands —— befriend our patriot cauſe.
What Briton *wars —— on liberty, and laws?*
Oh, Liberty! *thou ſun-ſhine of the heart!*
Thou ſmile of nature! and thou ſoul of art!
Without thy aid, no human hope cou'd grow:
And love, and wealth, and wiſdom, were but—woe!
Here thou muſt dwell—*thy face no ſlave dares ſee:*
And who, not Britiſh *born, is now left* free?
Hither from Rome, *thy taſte, thy genius, flies,*
For fancy cannot live ——— where courage dies.
Hail, my laſt hope, ſhe cries ——— inſpir'd by ME,
Wiſh, think, talk, write, and act *for liberty.*
Yet —— would you build my fabric, to endure,
Be your hearts warm ——— but, let your hands be pure.
Never, to ſhine, yourſelves, your country ſell:
Diſplac'd, think *nobly; when in power,* act *well.*
Combine, like modern ———fight, like ancient Rome,
War but abroad —— O, *taſte ſweet* Peace, *at home.*
Let no ſelf-ſerver general truſt betray.
No pique, no party, bar the public way.
Front an arm'd world, with union on your ſide;
No foe ſhall ſhake you ——— if no friends divide.

EPI-

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Mrs. GIFFARD.

THE fifth Act paſt, you'll think it ſtrange, to find
My ſcene of deep diſtreſs *is, yet, behind!*
Task'd for the Epilogue, *I fear you'll* blame
My want —— *of what you* love, *behind that name.*
But, for my ſoul, I can't, from ſuch high ſcening,
Deſcend, plum down at once, —— *to* double-meaning.
Judges! protect me ——*and pronounce it* fit,
That ſolemn ſenſe *ſhould end with* ſerious wit.
When the full heart o'erflows, with pleaſing pain,
Why ſhould we wiſh, *to make th' impreſſion* vain?
Why, *when two thinking hours have* fix'd *the play,*
Shou'd two light moments, laugh its uſe *away?*
'Twere to proclaim your virtues *but a* JEST,
Shou'd they who ridicule *'em, pleaſe you beſt.*
No — at your Actors hands, henceforth, require——
Off'rings more apt; *and a* ſublimer *fire!*
Thoughts, that may rivet, *not* efface, *the ſcene:*
Aids to the mind: *not flatt'ries for the* ſpleen.
When love, hate, pity, ——*doubt, hope, grief, and rage,*
With claſhing influence, fire *the glowing Stage;*
When the touch'd heart, relenting into woe,
From others' *fate,* does *its* own dangers *know:*
When ſoft'ning tenderneſs *unlocks the mind,*
And the ſtretch'd *boſom takes in* all mankind:
Sure, 'tis no time, *for the* bold *hand of wit*
To ſnatch back *virtues, from the* plunder'd *pit.*
Still, be it ours, *to give you* ſcenes, thus ſtrong,
And yours, *to cheriſh, and retain 'em,* long!
Then, ſhall the Stage *its general* uſe *endear;*
And every virtue, gather firmneſs here.
Pow'r be, to pardon ——*wealth to* pity, MOV'D;
And truth *be taught the art, to grow* belov'd:
Women, *to* charm, *with faſt, and ſure, effect;*
And men, *to* love 'em, *with a ſoft reſpect.*
'Till wit, found uſeful, goes for more than name,
And all who feel its influence, fan its flame.

Perſons

Perſons repreſented.

Don CARLOS, Viceroy of *Peru*, for the *Spaniards*, } Mr. W. GIFFARD.

Don ALVAREZ, Father of Don CARLOS, and former Viceroy, } Mr. GIFFARD.

ZAMOR, Indian Sovereign of one part of the country, } Mr. JOHNSON.

EZMONT, Indian Sovereign of another part, } Mr. HAVARD.

ALZIRA, Daughter of EZMONT, Mrs. GIFFARD.

EMIRA, CEPHANIA, } ALZIRA's Women.

Spaniſh and *American* Captains and Soldiers.

SCENE, in the City of LIMA.

ALZIRA:

A

TRAGEDY.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Don *Alvarez*, Don *Carlos*.

Alv. AT length, the *Council*, partial to my pray'r,
Has, to a ſon I love, transferr'd my pow'r.
Carlos, rule, happy: be a *Viceroy*, long!
Long, for thy Prince, and for thy God, maintain
This younger, richer, lovelier, half the globe;
Too fruitful, heretofore, in *wrongs*, and *blood:*
Crimes, the lamented growths of pow'rful *gold!*
Safe, to thy abler hand, devolve reſign'd,
Thoſe ſov'reign honours, which oppreſs'd my years,
And dimm'd the feeble lamp of waſted age.
Car. Long may it ſhine, and warm us with its rays!
Alv. It has too long, but not unuſeful, *flam'd.*
I, *firſt*, o'er wond'ring Mexico, in arms,
March'd the new horrors of a *world unknown*!
I ſteer'd the floating tow'rs of fearleſs Spain,
Through the plow'd boſom of an *untried* ſea.
Too *happy*, had my labours been ſo bleſs'd,
To change my brave aſſociates rugged ſouls,
And ſoften ſtubborn HEROES into MEN.
Their *cruelties*, my ſon, eclips'd their glory;

And

And I have *wept* a conqu'ror's ſplendid *ſhame*,
Whom Heav'n *not better* made, and, yet, made, *great*.
Weary'd at length, I reach my life's laſt verge;
Where I ſhall, peaceful, veil my eyes in reſt;
If, ere they cloſe, they but behold my Carlos
Ruling *Potoſi's* realm, by *Chriſtian* laws,
And making *gold more rich*, by gifts from Heav'n.
Car. Taught and ſupported, by *your* great example,
I learnt, beneath your eye, to *conquer*, realms,
Which, by your councils, I may learn to *govern*;
Giving thoſe laws, I firſt, receive, from *you*.
Alv. Not ſo.---Divided pow'r is pow'r *diſarm'd*.
Out-worn by labour, and decay'd by time,
Pomp is no more my wiſh. Enough, for *me*,
That, heard in *council*, age may temper raſhneſs.
Car. Were it not nobler, ſtill to hold faſt pow'r?
Alv. Truſt me, mankind but ill rewards the pains
Of over-prompt ambition.——'Tis, *now*, time
To give my long-neglected *God* thoſe hours,
Which cloſe the languid period of my days.
One only gift I aſk: refuſe not *that*:
As friend, I *aſk* it; and, as father, *claim*.
Pardon thoſe poor Americans, condemn'd,
For wand'ring hither, and, this morning, ſeiz'd.
To *my* diſpoſal give 'em kindly up,
That liberty, unhop'd, may charm the more,
A day like *this* ſhould merit ſmiles from all;
And mercy, ſoft'ning juſtice, mark it *bleſs'd*.
Car. Sir, all, that *Fathers* aſk, they *muſt* command.
Yet, condeſcend to recollect, how far
Compaſſion, undeſerv'd, might hazard all.
Alv. Curious, but innocent, they ſtraggled hither.
Car. In infant towns, like ours, methinks 'twere ſafe,
Not to familiarize theſe ſavage clans.
If we permit their ſpies to look too near us,
We teach 'em, at our coſt, to ſlight thoſe fires,
They once flew trembling from, when diſtant ſeen.
Frowning *revenge*, and ſounds of aweful *dread*,

Not ſmiling *pity*, tames theſe ſullen ſouls.
The ſour American, unbroke, and wild,
Spurns, with indignant rage, and bites his chain;
Humble, if puniſh'd; if regarded, fierce.
Pow'r *ſickens* by forbearance: rigid men,
Who feel not pity's pangs, are beſt obey'd.
Spaniards, 'tis true, impell'd by honour's laws,
Submit, unmurm'ring; and, unforc'd, go right:
But barb'rous nations muſt be held by *fear*;
Rein'd, and ſpurr'd hard, and bow'd to due controul.
The Gods themſelves, in this ferocious clime,
Till they look *grim* with *blood*, excite no dread.

Alv. Away, my ſon, with theſe deteſted ſchemes!
Periſh ſuch politic *reproach* of rule!
Are we not captains in our MAKER's cauſe,
O'er a *new Chriſtian* world to ſtretch his name,
His *peaceful* name! And ſhall we dare *convert*
By *murders*, which our *holy cheats* call *zeal?*
Shall we diſpeople realms, and *kill*, to *ſave?*
No, my miſguided Carlos, the broad eye
Of *one* CREATOR takes in all mankind.
His laws expand the heart; and rev'rend madmen,
Who, by deſtruction, would extend belief,
Stamp in theſe *Indians* honeſt breaſts a *ſcorn*
Of all we *teach*, from what they ſee, we *do*.

Car. Yet, the learn'd props of our unerring *Church*
Taught my late youth, committed to their care,
That ignorance, *averſe*, muſt be *compell'd*.

Alv. Our prieſts are all for vengeance, force, and fire.
And only in his *thunder*, act their God.
Hence, we ſeem *thieves*; and what we ſeem, we *are*.
Spain has *robb'd* every growth of this new world,
But its plain, honeſt, *nature!* —— Vain, unjuſt,
Proud, cruel, covetous, *we*, *we*, alone,
Are the Barbarians, here! —— An Indian heart
Equals in courage, the moſt prompt of ours;
But in ſimplicity of artleſs *truth*,
And every in-felt virtue's warmth, *excels* us.

Car.

Car. Were poliſh'd manners theirs, their truth were lovely
Alv. Had *they*, like us, been *bloody*; had they not
By *pity*'s pow'r been mov'd, and *mercy*'s love;
No ſon of mine had heard a *father*, now,
Reprove his erring raſhneſs. ——You *forget*,
That when a *pris'ner*, in their hands, then lately
Gall'd and provok'd by every cruel wrong,
When I alone ſurviv'd, ſome Indian archers
Knew me, and ſuddenly pronounc'd my *name*.
At once their bows, unbrac'd, o'erſpread the ground;
And a young *Savage Chief*, whom, yet, I *know not*,
Graceful, approach'd; and, kneeling, preſs'd my knees.
" Alvarez! is it *you*, (he cry'd)—— Live, long!
" Ours be your *virtue*, but not ours your *blood!*
" Live---and inſtruct oppreſſors, to be *lov'd.*"
---Bleſs'd be thoſe *tears*, my ſon!---I think, you *weep!*
Joy to your ſoft'ning ſoul! *Humanity*
Has pow'r, in *nature*'s right, beyond a *father*.
Car. He who unmov'd can hear ſuch worth, has none.
Alv. But from what *motive* ſprung this late *decline*,
From clemency of heart to new-born rigour?
Had you been *always* cruel, with what brow
Could you have hop'd to charm the lov'd Alzira?
Heireſs to realms, diſpeopled by your ſword!
At once your *Captive*, ſhe---and *Conqu'ror*, too.
Truſt me, —— with women *worth* a wiſe man's wiſh,
The *ſofteſt* lover, ever, beſt ſucceeds.
Car. Sir, I *obey:* YOUR *pleaſure* breaks their chains;
But is it not our duty to convert 'em?
So, runs the King's command.——So, wills the Church.
So, thrives Religion, and compels the blind:
So, draws our holy Altar ſouls, by force,
Till oppoſition dies, and ſleeps in peace:
So, *links* a govern'd world in *Faith*'s ſtrong chain;
And but one *Monarch* ſerves; and but ONE GOD.
Alv. Hear me, my ſon.--That, crown'd, in this new world,
Religion may erect her holy throne,
Is what, with ardent zeal, my ſoul deſires!

Let

Let *Heav'n* and Spain find, here, no future *foe!*
Yet; ne'er ſhall *perſecution*'s offspring *thrive:*
For, the *forc'd* heart, ſubmits but to *reſiſt.*
Reaſon *gains* all men, by *compelling* none.
Mercy was always *Heaven's* diſtinguiſh'd mark:
And he, who bears it not, has no friend *there.*

Car. Your reaſons like your arms are ſure to conquer;
I am inſtructed, and ennobled by 'em!
Indulgent virtue dwells in all you ſay,
And ſoftens, while you ſpeak, the liſt'ning ſoul!
Since Heav'n has bleſs'd you with this powerful gift;
To breathe perſuaſion, and un-charm reſolves,
Pronounce me favour'd, and you *make* me ſo.
Warm my Alzira's coldneſs; mould her heart;
And *teach* her to be mine.——I love that maid,
Spite of my pride! bluſh at it,----but, *love* on,
Yet will I ne'er, to ſooth unyielding ſcorn,
Unman the *ſoldier* in the *lover*'s cauſe.
I cannot *fan*, too long, this hopeleſs flame;
But I can die, to quench it.----Aid my paſſion:
You can do all things with Alzira's father.
—Bid him *command* his daughter to be kind.
Bid him —— But, whither would my love miſlead me!
Forgive the blind preſumption of a wiſh,
That to my weakneſs ſtoops my father's rank;
And ſends him, *beggar*, to an Indian's door!

Alv. 'Tis done, already. I have urg'd it to him.
Ezmont has mov'd his daughter, in your cauſe:
Wait the prepar'd event. Heav'n has been kind;
Since theſe illuſtrious captives, both, are *Chriſtians:*
Ezmont, *my* convert, and his daughter, *his.*
Alzira governs a whole *people's* mind:
Each watchful Indian reads her ſtudy'd eye,
And to *her heart's* firſt wiſh, conforms his own.
Your marriage will unite two diſtant *worlds:*
For, when the ſtern repiner at our pow'r,
Sees, in your arms, the daughter of his King,
His willing neck ſhall *court* the yoke he ſcorn'd.

Look, where good Ezmont comes!—Retire, my ſon:
And leave me to complete the taſk begun. [*Exit* Ca

Enter Ezmont.

Welcome my friend: your council, or command,
Has left I hope, Alzira well reſolv'd.
Ezm. Great *father* of the *friendleſs!*—Pardon, *yet*,
If one, whoſe ſword ſeem'd fatal to her race,
Keeps her heart cold, with ſome remains of horror.
We move with *ling'ring* ſteps, to thoſe we *fear*.
But prejudice will fly, before *your* voice;
Whoſe winning *manners* conſecrate your *laws*.—
To you, who gave us Heav'n, our *earth* is *due*.
Yours our *new being!* our enlighten'd ſouls!
Spain may hold *realms*, by purchaſe of her *ſword:*
And *worlds* may yield to pow'r—but WE, to VIRTUE.
Alv. 'Twas Heaven's the glorious change—be Hea-
ven's the praiſe!
Ezm. Your bloody nation's unſucceeding pride
Had made their *God* diſguſtful as their *crimes!*
We ſaw him, *hateful*, in *their* murd'rous *zeal*;
But *lov'd* him, in *your mercy*.---From *your* heart,
His influence ſtream'd *accepted:* and my crown,
My daughter, and my ſoul, became your ſlaves.
Father, at once, of Carlos, and of *me*,
I give him my Alzira, for *your* ſake:
And, with her, give Potoſi and Peru.
Summon the rev'rend *choir*; prepare the *rites:*
And truſt *my* promiſe, for my *daughter's* will.
Alv. Bleſs'd be the long-wiſh'd union—This joy paſt,
I ſhall go down in *peace*, and *hail* my grave.
Thou! Great Inſpirer! whoſe Almighty hand
Drew the dark *veil* aſide, that ſcreen'd *a world*,
Smile on theſe nuptials, which, confirm'd by *thee*,
Shall, in *one empire*, graſp the circled *globe*,
And taſk the ſun's whole round, to meaſure Spain!
Ezmont, farewel—I go to greet my *ſon*,
With welcome news, how much he owes my *friend*. [*Exit.*

Ezmont,

Ezmont, *alone.*

Oh! nameleſs Pow'r, unequall'd, and alone!
Whoſe dreadful vengeance overwhelm'd, at once,
My country, and her Gods, too weak to *ſave!*
Protect my failing years from new diſtreſs.
Robb'd of my all; but one dear *daughter* left me!
Oh! guard her heart; and guide her, to be *bleſs'd!*

Enter Alzira.

Smile, and *be happy*, while good-fortune *courts* thee!
And in *thy bleſſing*, chear thy *country's* woe.
Protect the vanquiſh'd: rule the victor's will:
Seize the *bent thunder* in his lifted hand;
And, from *deſpair's* low ſeat remount a *throne.*

Alz. I have no wiſh to charm---no joy, to *reign.*

Ezm. Lend the lov'd *public* thy reluctant heart;
And in the joy of *millions*, find *thy own.*
Nay, do not weep, Alzira: tears will, *now*,
Seem inſults; and reproach thy father's care.

Alz. Sir, if Alzira's peace was ever dear,
Shut not your ear to my deſpairing grief.

Ezm. Urge it no more: it is an *ill-tim'd* ſorrow.
Away! I had thy kind conſent before.

Alz. No---You *compel* the frightful ſacrifice:
And, ah! remorſeleſs Heav'n!——at what a *time!*
When the rais'd ſword of this all-murd'ring lover
Hangs o'er my people's heads, with threatening ſway,
To ſtrike the trembling remnant from my ſight,
And mark my nuptial day, their day of *death!*
Omens on *omens* have pronounc'd it *curs'd.*

Ezm. Quit theſe vain fears, theſe ſuperſtitious dreams,
Of unconfiding ignorance! What day?
What *omens?* ——We ourſelves, who *chuſe* our acts,
Make our own days, or happy, or accurs'd.

Alz. 'Twas on *this day*, the pride of all our ſtate,
Zamor, the great, the warlike Zamor, fell;
Zamor, my lover, and your purpos'd ſon.

Ezm. Zamor was brave: and I have mourn'd his fa
But the cold *grave diſſolves* ev'n *lovers'* vows.
Bear to the altar, then, a heart reſolv'd:
And bid thy ſummon'd virtue prop thy weakneſs.
Is not thy ſoul enroll'd a *Chriſtian?*---Hear me.
The aweful *Power*, that lent the *Chriſtians name*,
Speaks, in my voice; *commands* thee to be won.
Hear HIM: and learn obedience to *His* will.

Alz. Alas, my father! *ſpare* this dreadful *zeal.*
Has not the *Parent* ſpoke? Why ſpeaks the *God?*
I know, and I confeſs, a father's *power:*
At *his* command, to ſacrifice the life
He gave me, is a duty *Nature* taught.
But *my* obedience paſſes Nature's bounds;
Whate'er I *ſee* is, with my father's *eyes*;
Whate'er I *love* is, with my *father's* taſte;
I chang'd my very *Gods*, and took my *father's.*
Yet has this father, piouſly *ſevere*,
Wrong'd my believing weakneſs, and undone me.

You *told* me, to compoſe my troubled heart,
Peace held her dwelling at the altar's foot.
You *told* me, that *religion* cur'd *deſpair*;
And ſoften'd every *pang* that pierc'd the ſoul.
All, all, was kind *deceit!* all, dear *deluſion!*
Mix'd with th' impreſſion of an aweful *God*,
A *human* image *ſtruggles* in my heart,
And checks its willing virtue in its riſing.
Zamor, though dead to *nature*, lives to *love.*
Zamor ſtill triumphs in Alzira's breaſt;
Lord of her ſoul, and *holds back* all her wiſhes.

You frown---Alas! you blame a guilt you *caus'd.*
Quench then this flame for one you bad me love;
And *force* me to be *his*, whom moſt I hate.
If my dear country calls, I muſt reſign.

Yet, when you drag me to the altar's foot,
Tremble, to hear my tongue *deceive* my God;
To hear me, to your dreadful choice devote
A heart, that beats unchang'd, *another's due.*

Ezm.

Ezm. Alas, my child, what *unweigh'd* words are theſe !
Pity my *age*, unfit for *length'ning* woes :
Weakneſs aſks *reſt* : Pity theſe falling *tears*.
By all our *fates*, that all depend on THEE,
Let me *conjure* thee, to be *bleſs'd*, *thyſelf*,
Nor cloſe in wretchedneſs my life's laſt ſcene.
Why wou'd I *live*, but to redeem *thy* hopes ?
For thy own ſake, not mine, *aſſiſt* my care.
Haſt not the rip'ning proſpect of thy peace,
Hard, and, with labour'd patience, ſlowly grown.
Now, on thy inſtant *choice*, depends thy *fate* !
Why ſaid I *thine* ? 'Tis a whole *people*'s fate !
Wilt thou *betray* 'em ? have they *other* help ?
Have they one hope, but THEE ?—Think, think, Alzira ;
And nobly loſe *thyſelf*, to ſave a *ſtate*. [*Exit.*

Alz. Cruel accompliſhment ! ſublime *defect* !
So ſtrain we virtues, to *become* a throne,
Till *public duty* drowns our *private truth*.

Enter Don Carlos.

Car. Princeſs, you give a *lover* cauſe to doubt,
That this long labour of your ſlow conſent
Springs from a heart too *cold* to feel his flame.
While, for *your* ſake, ſuſpended law forbears
To puniſh rebels, whom *you* wiſh to *ſave*,
Ungrateful, you demand a *nation's freedom* ;
Yet, bind, in recompence, *my chains*, more cloſe !
But, miſconceive me not.———I wou'd not owe
A ſoften'd ſentiment to having *ſerv'd* you :
That were to *bribe* a heart my pride would *win*.
I ſhould mix bluſhes with a bridegroom's joy,
If, as my perquiſite of *power*, I gain'd you.
Let me *attract*, not *ſentence*——I would owe you,
All, to *yourſelf* : nor could I *taſte* a pleaſure,
That, in your *giving* it, might coſt you pain.
Alz. Join, in my fruitleſs *pray'rs* to angry Heav'n !—
This *dreadful day* comes charg'd with *pains*, for *both*.

—No wonder you *detect* my troubled ſoul:
It burſts unveil'd from my reproachful eyes,
And glows on ev'ry *feature's* honeſt *air*.
Such is the *plainneſs* of an *Indian* heart,
That it diſdains to ſculk behind the tongue;
But *throws out* all its wrongs, in all its rage.
She who can hide her purpoſe, can *betray*:
And that's a *Chriſtian* virtue, 've not learnt.
Car. I love your frankneſs, but reproach its *cauſe*,
Zamor, remember'd Zamor, ſpeaks, in *this*.
With hatred, ſtretch'd beyond th' extent of *life*,
He croſſes, from the *tomb*, his conqu'ror's will;
And, *felt thro' death*, revenges rival love.
Ceaſe to *complain*, and you may learn to *hear*.
My fame, your duty, *both*, require a *change*:
And, I *muſt* wiſh, it were from *tears*, to *joy*.
Alz. A rival's *grave* ſhould *bury* jealouſy.
But, whence your right, to *cenſure* ſorrow for him?
I *lov'd* him: I *proclaim* it. Had I *not*,
I had been blind to ſenſe, and loſt to reaſon.
Zamor was all the *prop* of our fall'n world:
And (but he lov'd *me* much) confeſs'd *no weakneſs!*
Had I not *mourn'd* a fate, *he* not deſerv'd,
I had *deſerved* the fate, he felt unjuſtly.
For *you*,—be *proud* no more: but dare be *honeſt*.
Far from preſuming to reproach my tears,
Honour my *conſtancy*; and praiſe my *virtue*.
Ceaſe to regret the *dues* I pay the dead:
And *merit*, if you *can*, a heart thus faithful. [*Exit*,

Don Carlos *alone*.

Spite of my fruitleſs paſſion, I approve her!
The pride, ſhe darts with this *ſincere* diſdain,
Aſtoniſhes my hope: and charms my anger.
—*What*, then, ſhall I *reſolve?*—It is more hard,
To tame one female *heart*, than all Peru!
Nature, adapting her to ſuit her *climate*,

Left

Left her all *ſavage*, yet all *ſhining* too!
But, 'tis *my* duty to be *maſter*, here;
Where (ſhe alone excepted) *all obey*.
I, who too faintly would her *heart* incline,
Can force her ſtubborn *hand*, and fix her mine.
Mine?—Were it *mine?* to chain th' *unwilling* gueſt?
And claſp reluctant *ſcorn*, to freeze my breaſt?
Lions love, ſo! ——'Tis man's more gen'rous part,
To win the willing *mind*, and graſp the HEART.
Then, mix the meeting *ſouls*.——Then, love's fierce fire
Glows pure: and reaſon *conſecrates* deſire.

ACT II.

Zamor, *and four Indian captains, in chains.*

Zamor. FRIENDS! we have *dar'd* beyond the ſtrength of mortals!
Our courage ſmil'd at doubts, and grew in danger!
Now, let us try the brave man's laſt redemption——
Now, ſince we *loſt* our vengeance, let *death* find us!
Why, ſhould we, longer, be *condemn'd* to *life*,
Defenceleſs, to our country, and Alzira?
Capt. Yet, why ſhould Spaniſh Carlos 'ſcape our ſwords?
Why thrive, beneath a weight of *un-check*'d crimes?
Zam. Add, why has Heav'n *forſaken* us, and VIRTUE?
Ye ſtrengthleſs pow'rs! whoſe altars ſmoak'd in *vain*!
Gods, of a *faithful*, yet a *cheated*, people!
Why have you thus, *betray'd* us, to the foe?
Why had ſix hundred Spaniſh *vagrants* power
To cruſh my throne, your temples, rites, and you?
Where are *your altars?* where *my glories*, Now?
Where is Alzira? more, *herſelf*, a God,
Than your *collected Queens*, of fancied heav'n!
Helpleſs, once more, thou ſeeſt me——*Loſt* Peru!
O'er ſhifting ſands, through deſarts, croſs'd in vain,

From foreſt wilds, impervious to the ſun;
From the world's waſtes, beneath the burning zone,
I brought thee *unhop'd* aid! the *wond'ring ſtars*
Beheld me, gath'ring from remoteſt *wilds*,
New ſtrengths, new proſpects—and new *means*---to *die!*
Your arms, your furtherance, your vaſt ſupport,
New-furniſh'd my deſires, and wing'd my rage!
Vengeance and *love*, once more, had mann'd my heart.
But, ah! how *vain* that love! how *loſt* that vengeance!
The ſlaves of *avarice* are honour's *maſters!*

Capt. Raſh, in the neighb'ring wood, we left our forces,
Paſſing, too bold, their city's guarded gate,
Blind, weak, and unſupported ——mad *diſcov'rers!*

Zam. Seiz'd but this morning, now from diff'rent dungeons
Th' infernal murderers have hither brought us,
Unknowing to *what death*, tho' ſure to die.
Yet, it o'erjoys me, we have *met*, once more.
But *where?* what place is this? has none yet heard
Who governs, here? what fate Alzira found?
Whether her father is, like us, their *ſlave?*
Dear, wretched friends, who ſhare a death, my *due*,
Can none inſtruct me what I wiſh to know?

Capt. From ſep'rate priſons, hither led, like *you*,
Thro' diff'rent ſtreets we came, the *cauſe* not known,
All uninform'd of what you ſeek to learn.
Great, but unhappy Prince! deſerving, long,
A *nobler* fate! each ſilent ſoul laments
Its want of pow'r to ſave ſo lov'd a leader.
Now——to die *with* you, is our nobleſt claim,
Since, to die *for* you, was a choice *deny'd* us.

Zam. Next the wiſh'd glory of ſucceſs in war,
The greateſt is, to *die*, *renown'd*, for virtue:
But, to die *noteleſs*, in the ſilent *dark*,
Is to die, ſcorn'd, and ſhame our ſuff'ring country!
We fall, undignify'd, by *villains'* hands:
A ſacrifice to Europe's outcaſt bloodhounds!
Men, rais'd by *others'* wrongs, and poorly rich,

With

With *others'* plunder'd *treaſure!* curs'd be theſe *butchers!*
Blood-ſtain'd *inſulters* of a *yielded* world!
Riflers, who give up Kings, to *tire* their tortures,
But, for diſcovery of the *gold* we *ſcorn*,
As droſs, leſs valu'd, and leſs wiſh'd, than *they!* ———
To be, in death, the cauſe of my *friends' dying!*
To die, and leave Alzira, to my murderers!
THIS is a death of *horror*, not of *fame!*
This is the *body's* death ——— but *ſhakes* the *ſoul!*

Enter Alvarez, *with a guard of* Spaniards.

Alv. Live: and be *free.*
[Spaniſh *ſoldiers unfetter the* Indians.
Zam. Ye Gods of loſt Peru!
What did I hear! ——— ſaid he, *Be free and live?*
What vaſt, myſterious *accident* of virtue?
Some pow'r divine, in ſport, deceives my wonder!
Thou *ſeem'ſt* a Spaniard!---and---but thou FORGIV'ST,
I cou'd have ſworn thee, *Chriſtian!*---who? what *art* thou?
Art thou ſome *God?* or this new city's *King?*
Alv. Chriſtian I am; and Spaniard: but *no King.*
Zam. What is thy *pow'r?*
Alv. ——To ſave the *weak*, *diſtreſs'd.*
Zam. What thy *diſtinction*; ſay, thou gen'rous *wonder?*
Alv. The love of *pity*, when the wretched *want it.*
Zam. Pity! and Chriſtian!---what inſpir'd thy great-
[neſs?
Alv. My *memory*, my *duty*, and my *God.*
Zam. Thy *God?* ——I have it now —— theſe hungry
[*waſters*,
Theſe human *ſeemers*, with *but forms* of men;
Theſe thirſters after only *gold* and *blood*;
From ſome *coarſe*, *lawleſs*, part of Europe, came;
And ſerve ſome *bloodier* God, that *wars* with *thine!*
Alv. Their *faith* the ſame with mine, but not their *nature:*
Chriſtians by birth, by error made *un-chriſtian.*
In pow'r grown giddy, they *diſgrace* command.
Thou know'ſt *their faults* too well: now, know *my* DUTY.
Twice has the ſun's broad traverſe girt the globe,
Twice

Twice wheel'd the ſummer round your world, and ours;
Since a brave Indian, native of your land,
To whom *ſurprize* in *ambuſh* made me captive,
Gave me the *forfeit life* his ſword had won.
The *unexpected* mercy forc'd my *bluſhes:*
For, I perceiv'd, *compaſſion* of YOUR woes,
Was but a *duty*, when I thought, 'twas *virtue.*
Thenceforth, your countrymen became my brothers:
And, I have, now, but *one* complaint againſt them;
——That I muſt never *know*, his name, who ſav'd me.

Zam. He has Alvarez' voice! he has his features!
His age the *ſame*, too; and the *ſame* his ſtory!
'Tis *he!*——there is *no other* honeſt Chriſtian.
Look on us all: and recollect his face,
Who, wiſely ſpar'd thy life, to ſpread thy virtues.

Alv. Come nearer, noble youth.——by Heav'n 'tis *he!*
Now, my dim eyes, you teach me my *decay*,
That could not let me *ſee* my *wiſh indulg'd*,
But *clouded* ev'n my gratitude!——My *ſon!*
My benefactor! ſaviour of my age!
What can I do! inſtruct me to *deſerve* thee.
Dwell in my ſight; and I will *be* thy *father.*
Thou wilt have *loſt* the merit of thy *gift*,
If, from the pow'r it gave, thou claim'ſt no *payment.*

Zam. Truſt me, my father, had thy *Spaniſh* ſons
Shewn but a glimmering of thy aweful *virtue*,
Grateful Peru, now, *deſolately*, theirs,
Had been a peopled world, of *willing* ſlaves.
Rather than live, among that *felon* race,
Take, take me, ſilent death; and ſcreen my ſoul
From the reliefleſs rage of *un-felt* curſes.
All I wou'd *aſk*, all I will *take*, from Spain,
Is but, to be inform'd, if Ezmont LIVES?
Or, has *his* blood new-ſtain'd their hands with murder?
Ezmont?—perhaps you knew him not?---*That* Ezmont,
Who was Alzira's *father*?——I muſt ſtop,
And weep——before I dare go on, to aſk——
Whether——that father,---and that daughter,—*live?*

Alv.

Alv. Hide not thy tears: weep boldly---and be *proud*
To give the *flowing virtue* manly *way*.
'Tis nature's *mark*, to know an *honeſt* heart by,
Shame on thoſe breaſts of *ſtone*, that cannot *melt*,
In ſoft *adoption* of *another's* ſorrow.
But, be *thou comforted*: for both thy friends
Live; and are happy, *here*.———
Zam. ———And, ſhall I *ſee* 'em?
Alv. Ezmont, within this hour, ſhall teach his friend,
To *live*, and *hope*——— and be as bleſs'd, as *he*.
Zam. ALZIRA's Ezmont?———
Alv. ——From *his* mouth, not mine,
Thou ſhalt this moment, learn, whate'er thou ſeek'ſt.
He ſhall inſtruct thee in a ſmiling *change*,
That has united Spain with ſav'd Peru.
I have a *ſon*, to *bleſs*, with this new joy:
He will partake *my* gratitude, and *love* thee.
——I quit thee,——— but will inſtantly *return*
To charm thee with this union's happy ſtory,
That nothing, now, on earth, has pow'r to ſever:
Yet, which, once clos'd, ſhall *quiet* warring worlds.
[*Exit, with guards.*
Zam. At length, th'awak'ning Gods remember Zamor,
And to atone my wrongs, by working *wonders*,
Have made one Spaniard HONEST, to reward me!
Ind. Capt. Alvarez is, himſelf, the *Chriſtians' God*;
Who, long provok'd, and bluſhing at their crimes,
In his own right deſcends, to *veil* their ſhame.
Zam. He ſays he has a ſon: that ſon ſhall be
My brother; if, at leaſt, he does but prove
Worthy (could *man* be *ſo*) of ſuch a father! [hearts!
Ind. Capt. O, day! O, dawn of hope, on our ſad
Zam. Ezmont, now, after three long years of *woe*,
Ezmont, Alzira's *father*, is reſtor'd me!
Alzira too, the dear, the gen'rous maid!
She, whom my ſighing ſoul has been *at work* for!
She, who has made me *brave*, and left me *wretched!*
Alzira *too*, is here; and *lives* to thank me.

Enter

Enter Ezmont.

Oh! ye *profuſe rewarders* of my pain!
He comes! my Ezmont comes!——Spring of my hope:
Thou *father* of my lab'ring mind's *inſpirer!*
Hard let me preſs thee, to a heart that loves thee.
Eſcap'd from death, *behold* returning Zamor.
He will not, cannot die, while there is *hope*,
That he may live to *ſerve a ſuff'ring friend.*
——Speak to me——be thy firſt ſoft word ALZIRA!
Say, ſhe is *here:* and *bleſs'd* as Heav'n can make her.
Ezm. Unhappy Prince!—ſhe lives—nor lives remote.
Words cannot reach deſcription of her *grief*,
Since firſt the news of thy ſad *death* was brought her.
Long dwelt ſhe, ſorrowing, o'er an empty *tomb*,
Which, for thy *fancied form*, ſhe rais'd to *weep on.*
——But thou ſtill *liv'ſt!*—amazing chance!——thou *liv'ſt!*
Heav'n grant ſome doubtful means to *bleſs* thee, long,
And make thy life as happy—— as 'tis *ſtrange!*
——What brought thee HITHER, Zamor?
Zam. Cruel queſtion!
Colder, than all the *deaths* I have eſcap'd from!
Why doſt thou *aſk?*—Where *elſe* cou'd I have hop'd
To find, and to redeem, thyſelf, and daughter?
Ezm. Say *that* no more——'tis miſery, to *hear* it.
Zam. Bethink thee of the black, the direful *day*,
When that vile Spaniard—CARLOS, (curſe the *name!*)
Invulnerable, or to *ſword* or *pity*,
O'erturn'd thoſe walls, which *Time*, when *young*, ſaw built,
By earth-attracted children of the *Sun.*
Periſh his name! and oh! be curs'd my fate,
Who, yet, no *nearer* brought him, than to *thought*,
In horror of his murders! 'Twas the wretch,
Who bears that name of Carlos, blaſted all.
Ezm. Why dwells thy anger on that ſingle name?
Zam. 'Twas in *that name*, pillage and ſlaughter ſpread!
'Twas in that name they dragg'd Alzira from me;

Bury'd

Bury'd in duſt the temples of our Gods :
And ſtain'd with the ſurrounding off'rers blood,
Their violated altars ! The ſhock'd *Pow'r*,
That ſmil'd expectant on the marriage vow,
Ruſh'd back, and preſs'd in vain his *brother Gods*,
To vindicate their empire.——Spain's *dark Pow'r*
Prevail'd : and I was captive led to Carlos.

Ezm. Alas ! I know, too well, thy direful ſtory.

Zam. I will not *terrify* thy pitying breaſt,
I will not *tell thee*, then, to what ſlow tortures
That villain Spaniard's avarice condemn'd me ;
Condemn'd me, Ezmont, for the ſake of *gold !*
Gold, the *divinity* of beggar Spain ;
But *our neglected refuſe !*——'Tis enough,
That, almoſt lifeleſs, 'midſt their torments left,
And *ſeeming* dead, they, (*tir'd*, not ſatisfied)
Forbore, becauſe I felt not.———I *reviv'd*,
To feel, once more, but never to *forget*,
The *grindings* of their inſult. Three long years
Have lent me friends, and hopes, and arms, for *vengeance*.
Cloſe ambuſh'd, in the neighb'ring woods they lie,
Sworn, the *revengers* of their bleeding country.

Ezm. Alas ! my heart compaſſionates thy wrongs :
But, do not *ſeek* a ruin, that would *ſhun* thee.
What can thy flint-arm'd Indians courage do ?
What can weak *arrows*, ſpoils of *fiſhes bones ?*
How can brave, *naked*, *untrain'd*, warriors conquer ?
Unequally oppos'd to *iron men :*
Of woundleſs boſoms, coated o'er with ſafety !
Arm'd too with miſſive thunders in their hand,
That ſtream *death* on us, ſwifter than the winds !
No——ſince the *world*, they ſay, has yielded to 'em,
Yield Zamor, and Peru ; and let 'em reign.

Zam. *Let* the *world* yield——Zamor will always find
Some gen'rous corner, in it, fit for *freedom*.
Grant I were born to *ſerve* ; obedience claims
Returns : claims *benefit* ; *protection* ; *favour :*
Outrage and wrongs can claim *correction* only.

Their

Their lightnings and their thunders; their ſafe *ſhells*,
Caſes for fear, which guard their *iron war*;
Their fiery *ſteeds*, that tear the trampled earth,
And hurl fierce riders headlong on the foe;
Theſe outward *forms* of death, that fright the world,
I can look ſtedfaſt on: and dare *deſpiſe*.
The *novelty* once loſt, the force will fail:
Curſe on our feeble *gold!* It calls in foes,
Yet, helps not to *repel* the wrongs it *draws!*
Oh! had but STEEL been ours!———

Ezm. No———Partial Heav'n
Has, with *that manly wealth*, enrich'd our foe!

Zam. Yet, not to leave our vengeance *quite diſarm'd*,
Depriving us of *ſteel*, it gave us *virtue*. [*chang'd*.

Ezm. Virtue was *bleſs'd*, of old:—But,—*Times* are

Zam. No matter——let us keep our *hearts*, the *ſame*.
Tho' the ſtars chang'd their courſe, virtue were virtue.
Alzira cannot change: Alzira's juſt.
Alzira's faithful, to her vows, and *me*.

Ezm. Ah! do not name th' unhappy maid, too tenderly.

Zam. Save me, ye Gods! from a friend's *downcaſt eye!*
Whence are thoſe ſighs, and tears?

Ezm. Too wretched Zamor!

Zam. Not wretched—if Alzira's father's mine.
Theſe tyrants cannot, ſure, *unking* thy ſoul!
And teach a Monarch's heart to ſhrink at danger!

Ezm. They cannot. 'Tis a change I will not feel.
Nor are our conqu'rors, *all*, unjuſt:——for, *know*,
'Twas *Heav'n* induc'd theſe *Chriſtians* to our clime,
Leſs to ſubdue, than ſave.——Friends to the *ſoul*,
They brought inſtruction with them, here unfound:
Doctrines immortal, that can tread on death!
The ſcience, of ſalvation, by *belief!*
The art, of living *bleſs'd*, and dying, *ſafe!*

Zam. Or I *am deaf*: or, wou'd to Heav'n, I *were!*
But, if I heard thee, right thou ſeem'ſt to *praiſe*—
Theſe *pilf'ring zealots*, who uſurp thy throne,
And would *convert* thy daughter, to a *ſlave!*

Ezm.

Ezm. Alzira is *no ſlave.*——
Zam. Bleſs royal Ezmont!
Pardon ſome tranſport, which *deſpair* inflam'd;
And, to great woes, indulge a little warmth.
If not a ſlave, ſhe holds her ſolemn *vow:*
As thou thy *oath*, before our altar ſworn.
Freedom and perjury, can never *meet.*
Ezm. What are *our* altars? what our *Idol Gods?*
Phantoms, of human *coinage*, fear'd no more!
I would not wiſh to hear thee cite their name.
Zam. How! was our fathers' worſhip *vain deceit?*
Ezm. It was: and I have happily *diſclaim'd* it.
May the great ſingle *Pow'r*, that rules *whole Heaven*,
Lend thy dark heart one ray, of truth divine!
Mayſt thou, lamented Zamor, learn to know,
And, knowing, to confeſs, in Europe's right,
Her God ſhould be ador'd, *her* ſons obey'd! [*rapine?*
Zam. Obey'd! Hell blaſt 'em!—What! theſe ſons of
Death! they have robb'd thee, not of *faith* alone,
They pilfer'd ev'n thy *reaſon!*—Yet 'twas *wiſe*,
When thou would'ſt keep no *vows*, to own no *Gods.*
But, tell me?—is Alzira too forſworn?
True to her father's weakneſs, has *ſhe* fallen?
Serves *ſhe* the *Gods* of *Chriſtians?*
Ezm. Hapleſs youth!
Tho' bleſs'd in my own change, I *weep* for thine.
Zam. He, who betrays his friend, has *cauſe* for weeping.
Yet, tears, they ſay, ſhew *pity:*—if they *do*,
Pity this torment, which thy ſhame has coſt me.
Pity my heart, alarm'd, for Heav'n, and Ezmont.
For Heav'n betray'd, like me! I'm torn at once,
From love, and zeal, and vengeance. Take me, *Chriſtians*;
Drag me to die at my Alzira's feet:
And I will ſigh away my ſoul, to mourn her.
Yet, have a care——be cautious, ere I fall,
Of urging raſhneſs, to repel *deſpair*,
Reſume a Sov'reign's heart! and feel for empire.

Enter

Enter Alonzo, *to* Ezmont.

Alonzo. My Lord, the *ceremonies* wait your preſence
Ezm. Farewel—I follow thee.
Zam. No, by my wrongs!
I will not quit this hold, till I have learnt,
WHAT *ceremony*, what *black purpoſe*, waits thee?
Ezm. Away——be counſell'd—fly this fatal city.
Zam. Not, tho' the *Chriſtian Pow'r* that blaſts my lo
Shou'd rain down *lightnings* on me——ſtill wou'd I on
Tho' my own Gods cry'd, *ſtay*, ſtill wou'd I *follow*.
Ezm. Forgive the force of an *unwiſh'd* refuſal——
Guards, to your care I muſt commit this madman.
Reſtrain him——He wou'd violate our altar.
Theſe *Pagans*, obſtinate in *idol zeal*,
Malign our holy myſt'ries; and profane
The Church's ſolemn ſervice.——Guard the door.
'Tis not in right of my own pow'r I ſpeak;
'Tis Carlos, in *my* voice, commands your care.
[*Exit with guards, after they have freed him from* Zamo
Zam. Did I not her him, friends!—or *am* I mad?
Did I not hear him uſe the name of Carlos?
O, treachery! O, baſeneſs! O, my wrongs!
O! laſt, uncredited, reproach of nature!
Ind. Capt. Ezmont commands, for Carlos!
Zam. 'Twas NOT Ezmont:——
'Twas that black DEVIL, that ſcares the *Chriſtian* zeal,
Lied, in HIS *ſhape*, to ſcandalize Peru!
O, *Virtue!* thou art baniſh'd from mankind.
Ev'n from Alzira's *heart*, thou now art *fled*.
——Theſe villain *bart'rers rob* us NOT of *gold*,
They *pay* its fatal price, in *morals ruin'd*.
Deteſted Carlos, then, is *here!*——oh! friends!
What counſel? what reſource? to ſtop deſpair.
Ind. Capt. Let not my Prince condemn the faithful bold-
That wou'd *adviſe* his ſorrows.——Old Alvarez [neſs,
Will ſtrait return, and bring, perhaps, that *ſon*,

With

With whom to ſhare his joy the good man haſten'd.
Urge him to ſee us ſafe, without their gates:
Then, ſuddenly rejoin your ambuſh'd friends,
And march, back, *equal*, to your purpos'd vengeance.
Let us not *ſpare* a life, but good Alvarez,
And this lov'd *ſon!* I, near the *wall*, remark'd
Their *arts*, and modes of *ſtructure*: their ſharp *angles*,
Deep *ditch*, broad *bulwarks*, edg'd with ſleeping *thunders*.
I ſaw, and weigh'd it, all: and found *hope* ſtrongeſt.

Zam. What ſcheme, prophetic, has inflam'd thy heart?

Ind. Capt. Our groaning fathers, brothers, ſons, and friends,
In fetter'd labour toil, to *houſe* their ſpoilers.
Theſe, when we march to their unhop'd relief,
Will riſe, within the town, behind their maſters:
While you, mean while, without, advance againſt them;
And, on our dying bodies, proudly heap'd,
Bridge a bold entrance, o'er their bloody *rampart*.
There, may you turn, againſt their tyrant heads,
Thoſe fiery ſtorms of death, thoſe mouths of murder,
Thoſe *forms*, that frightning honeſt, artleſs bravery,
Build, on our *ignorance*, a throne for wrongs.

Zam. *Illuſtrious* wretchedneſs! by Heav'n, it charms me,
To ſee theſe ſoaring ſouls out-tower their fortune.
Shall we—we ſhall—we will — recover empire?
Carlos ſhall feel Peru, deſpis'd PERU,
Knock at his trembling *heart*, and claim *atonement*.

Ind. Capt. I will attempt eſcape—and warn our friends.
[*Exit.*

Zam. Come, dire *revenge!* thou melancholy god!
That comforts the diſtreſs'd with ſhadowy *hopings!*
Strengthen our willing hands: let Carlos die!
Let but that Spaniſh murd'rer, Carlos, *die*,
And I am half *repaid* my kingdom's loſſes!
But, we are wretches, *indolently* brave:
We talk of *vengeance*, while we ſleep, in *chains!*
Alvarez has forgot me: Ezmont ſlights me:
And ſhe I love is theirs, whom moſt I hate.
All the poor comfort of my heart is *doubting*.

Hark! what ſurpriſing noiſe! [*Shout.*] It riſes, louder,
And ſudden fires, high-flaming, *double* day! [miſchiefs
Hark! — from their iron throats, [*Guns.*] yon roaring
Pour their triumphant inſult. [*Trumpets*, &c.] What new
Or what new *crime*, demands this ſwell of joy? [*feaſt*,
Now, in their heedleſs mirth, deſcend ſome God;
And teach us to be *free*; or, failing, *die*.
Oh! my loſt friends! 'tis *liberty*, not *breath*,
Give the brave, *life!*—ſhun ſlav'ry, more than death.
He, who ſpurns ſhame, and dares diſdain to *be*:
Mocks chains, and wrongs, — and is, for ever, *free*.
While the baſe *grov'ler*, never ſafe, tho' *low*,
Creeps but to ſuff'rings: and lives on, for WOE!

ACT III.

Alzira, *alone*.

SHADE of my murder'd lover! *ſhun* to *view* me:
Riſe to the *ſtars*, and make their brightneſs *ſweeter*;
But, ſhed no gleam of luſtre on Alzira.
She has betrayed her faith, and married Carlos!
The *ſea*, that roll'd its watry world, *betwixt* us,
Fail'd to *divide* our *hands* — and he has *reach'd* me!
The altar trembled, at th' unhallow'd touch:
And Heaven *drew back*, reluctant, at our meeting.
Pale, but ſoft-hovering *ghoſt*, that haunt'ſt my fancy!
Thou, dear, tho' bloody *form*, that ſkims, before me!
Thou never-dying, yet thou *buried* Zamor!
If ſighs, and tears, have power to pierce the *grave*;
If Death, that knows no pity, could but hear me;
If ſtill thy gentle ſpirit loves Alzira:
Pardon, that even in *death*, ſhe dar'd *forſake* thee!
Pardon her rigid ſenſe of *nature's* duties:
A parent's will! — a pleading country's ſafety!
At *theſe* ſtrong calls, ſhe ſacrific'd her *love*,

To joyleſs glory, and to taſteleſs peace:
And, to an empty world, in which *Thou art not!*
O! Zamor! Zamor! follow me no longer.
Drop ſome dark *veil*, ſnatch ſome kind *cloud*, before thee,
Cover that conſcious *face*, and let death *hide* thee!
Leave me, to ſuffer, wrongs that Heaven allots me:
And teach my buſy fancy to forget thee.

Enter Emira.

Where are thoſe *captives*? are they *free*, Emira?
Where thoſe ſad *children* of my mournful *country*?
Will they not ſuffer me to *ſee*, to *hear* them?
To ſit and weep, and mingle with their mournings?

Emira. Ah! rather, dread the rage of angry Carlos,
Who threatens 'em with ſome new ſtroke of horror.
Some cruel purpoſe hangs, this moment, o'er 'em!
For, through this window look, and ſee, diſplay'd,
The broad *red* ſtandard, that betokens *blood!*
Loud burſts of death roar from their iron priſons, [*Guns.*
And *anſwer*, dreadful, to each other's *call!*
The council haſtes, alarm'd, and meets, in uproar. [*Shouts.*
All I have heard, beſides, is, that the Prince,
Your father, has been ſummon'd to attend.

Alz. Immortal guardians of th' endanger'd *juſt!*
Have I, for *this*, in vain, betray'd my *peace?*
Dares the dire *huſband*, recent from the *altar*,
New to my forc'd conſent, —— and ſcarce, yet, *Lord*
Of my repenting *hand*; ſo *ſoon*, let looſe,
His re-commiſſion'd *murders!* Muſt my nuptials
Serve, as the *prelude*, to my people's deaths!
O, marriage! marriage! what a *curſe* is *thine*,
Where hands alone *conſent*, and hearts *abhor!*

Enter Cephania.

Ceph. One of the captive Indians, juſt ſet free,
In honour of the joy that crowns this day,

Prays your permiſſion, Madam, to be heard,
And at your princely feet, diſcloſe ſome *ſecret.*
Alz. Let him, with firmneſs, and with freedom, e
For him, and for his friends, he knows, I *live.*
Dear to my eyes, I mark 'em, with delight,
And love, alas, in *them*, their poor loſt country.
—But, why *alone?*—Why *one?*
Ceph. It is that captain,
To whoſe victorious hand, I heard, but now,
Alvarez, your new Lord's illuſtrious father,
Ow'd his remitted life, from Indians ſav'd.
Emira. With earneſt preſſure, he has ſought your preſe
He met me, ent'ring, and with trembling haſte,
Implor'd me to befriend th' important prayer.
He told me, further, that the Prince your father,
For ſome ſtrange cauſe, this Indian ſeems to *know*,
Had charg'd the guards he 'ſcap'd from, to prevent
His acceſs to your ear.—Methinks, there ſits
A kind of ſullen greatneſs, on his brow,
As if it veil'd, in grief, ſome aweful purpoſe.
Ceph. I watch'd him--and he walks, and turns, and wee
Then ſtarts, and looks at Heaven; and to the Gods,
Pours up an ardent ſigh, that breathes *your* name!
I pitied him—— but, gather'd from this *freedom*,
That he's a ſtranger to your *rank*, and *greatneſs*. [&
Alz. What rank? What greatneſs?—Periſh all di
That, from the wrong'd *unhappy*, bars the *great!*
Who knows, but this was, once, ſome gen'rous *frie*
Some brave *companion*, of my Zamor's arms!
Who knows, but he was near him, when he fell;
And brings ſome meſſage from his parting ſoul!
How dare I then *receive* him?——Can my heart
Be *proof*, againſt the laſt, kind, words of Zamor?
Will not the half-lull'd pain, rekindling freſh,
Burn, with increaſe of ſmart, and wring my ſoul?
—No matter,—let him enter.— [*Exit* Ceph
——Ha! what mean
This ſudden *chillneſs*, ſadd'ning, round my heart,

In ſhort, faint, *flutt'rings*, never felt before!
Ah! fatal reſidence!—From the firſt hour,
Theſe hated walls became Alzira's priſon,
Each diff'rent moment brought ſome diff'rent pain.

Enter Zamor.

Zam. Art thou, at length, *reſtor'd* me?—Cruel! *tell* me?
Art thou, indeed, Alzira?
Alz. ——Gentle *ſpirit!*———
Forgive me.——Do not come to *chide* th' *unhappy!*
I have been wrong'd; but—— [*Faints into his arms.*
Zam. Thine, ſhe *wou'd* have ſaid;
And her imperfect purpoſe fully bleſs'd me,
Revive, thou deareſt, loveliеſt, loſt, Alzira!
Zamor will live no longer, ſhou'dſt *thou die.*
Alz. The kind, forgiving, *ſhade* is, ſtill before me!
It wak'd me, by a ſound, that *ſeem'd* his *name.*
Zam. I am *no ſhadow*, if Alzira's MINE;
I am thy *living lover*, at thy feet [*Kneeling.*
Reclaiming thee, thou nobleſt *half* himſelf!
Alz. Can it be *poſſible*, thou ſhou'dſt be Zamor?
Zam. Thy Zamor——THINE.
Alz. Dare I believe, thou *liv'ſt?*
Zam. 'Tis in *thy* power
To make that truth *undoubted.*—Do but *ſay*
Thou wou'dſt not have me *die*,—I will *live*, on:
To thank thee, *thus*, with everlaſting *love.*
[*Riſes, and catches her in his arms.*
Alz. O! days of ſoftneſs!—O! remember'd *years*,
Of ever-vaniſh'd happineſs!—O! Zamor!
Why has the grave been bountiful, *too late?*
Why ſent thee back, *in vain?* to make joy *bitter*;
By mix'd *ideas* of diſtracting *horror!*
Ah, Zamor!—what a *time* is *this*, to charm in!
Thy every word, and look, ſhoots daggers through me.
Zam. Thou *mourn'ſt* then, my return?

Alz. I *do*—I muſt——
Yet—wou'd it had been *ſooner!*
Zam. Generous tenderneſs! [no
Alz. Where haſt thou been, thus long,—unfound,
Zam. A wand'ring vagabond, that trod the world,
In fruitleſs ſearch of *means*, to ſave Alzira.
Not all the tort'ring *racks*, of *villain* Carlos,
Cou'd from my panting heart expel thy image:
The bloody ſpoilers tir'd their rage *in vain:*
I brav'd their wounds, and inſults.—Life had, *yet*,
No *leiſure* to forſake me. THOU requir'dſt me.
The groans of ſuff'ring nations reach'd my *ſoul*,
And bad it *ſtruggle*, to revenge mankind.
Alas! thou trembleſt! thy ſoft nature ſhrinks,
At bare *recital* of theſe *Spaniſh virtues.*
Oh! 'twas the guardian God that ſmiles on *love*,
Knew thy kind wiſh;—and, for *thy* ſake, ſuſtain'd me.
Thou wilt adore, I know, his gentle *goodneſs.*
Thy pious heart diſdains to *quit* thy Gods,
Becauſe they *ſuffer* with thee; and have fail'd
To ſtem th' invading hoſt of Spain's *new Heaven!*
Thou haſt too little falſehood, for a *Chriſtian.*
—Haſt thou e'er heard of that baſe wretch, call'd Carlos
A birth, that blacken'd *nature!* a taught *monſter!*
Sent, in our ſhape, from ſome far diſtant world,
To humble *ours*, with ſenſe of *human baſeneſs!*
They tell me, he is here.—Grant Heav'n thou *know'ſt* him
Thou, *then*, ſhalt *guide* my vengeance,——to this, *firſt*,
This *vileſt*, of its victims.
Alz. Find him, *here*——
Black, in *my breaſt*, he lives: ſtrike, ſtrike, and reach him
Zam. Hold, heart—and break not, *yet*—This MAY be—*pity.*
Alz. Strike—for—I merit neither life,—nor thee.
Zam. Ezmont! I *feel* thee; and believe thee, *all!*
Alz. Did he then *tell* thee?——Had my father *power*
To dwell ſo plainly on my hopeleſs woes,
As to *deſcribe* 'em to thee?——Did he *name*
The dreadful *huſband*—his loſt daughter owes him?

Zam.

Zam. No--but *thou may'ſt:* for, THAT will harden Zamor,
That he can never be *aſtoniſh'd*, more!
Alz. Yes—I *will* tell it thee—Prepare to tremble:
Not for *thyſelf* to tremble;—but for *me.*
I will lay open the vaſt horror, to thee:
Then, thou ſhalt weep, and live:—and bid *me—die.*
Zam. Alzira!—oh!—
Alz. This Carlos—
Zam. Carlos! why? whence?
Curſe on his name,—why thus, for ever, Carlos?
Alz. I was, this morning, ſworn, *for ever—his!*
Zam. Sworn *whoſe?*
Alz. —You nam'd him—I have been betray'd.
I was not weak;—I *fell*, to ſave my *country.*
Zam. What haſt thou done? What tale of horror
ſhakes thee?
Alz. —Even on *this* fatal day, within my hearing,
Almoſt within thy ſight, *Chriſtian* Alzira
Plighted, in preſence of the *Chriſtian God*,
Her hapleſs hand, to Carlos—
Zam. Oh!—the perfidy!
Alz. It hopes no pardon!—All my Gods renounc'd!
My lover wrong'd! my country's freedom ſold!
All, all, *demand* revenge—But do *thou kill* me:
Thou wilt ſtrike tenderly—my ſummon'd blood
Shall ſpring to *meet* thy hand—and, flow to find thee.
Zam. CARLOS! Alzira, 'tis *impoſſible!*
Alz. Were I diſpos'd to *mitigate* my crime,
I cou'd alledge a *father's* aweful *power*;
I cou'd remind thee of our *ruin'd ſtate:*
Cou'd plead my *tears*, my *ſtruggles*, and *diſtraction:*
Ere three, long, wretched, *years* confirm'd thee *dead.*
I cou'd, with juſtice, charge my *faith renounc'd*
On hatred of thoſe Gods, who *ſav'd not* Zamor.
But, I diſclaim excuſe,—and *ſhun* remiſſion.
Love finds me *guilty*; and that guilt condemns me.
Be *thou* but ſafe, no matter what *I ſuffer.*

When life has *loſt* the *joy* that made it *bleſs'd*,
She who dies ſooneſt, always dies moſt happy.
Why do'ſt thou *view* me, with ſo *kind* an eye ?
Thou ſhould'ſt look *ſternly*, I deſerve no *pity*.
Zam. Yes: if thou lov'ſt, I cannot hold thee guilty
—*Wiſhing* me bleſs'd, methinks thou *mak'ſt* me ſo.
Alz. When, by my father urg'd, and by Alvarez,
And inly too impell'd, perhaps, to fate,
By ſome *forſaken God*, who meant *revenge* ;
When by the Chriſtian's fears, and my touch'd heart,
At once, beſet, they dragg'd me to the *temple*,
Even in th moment when advancing Carlos
Sought my eſcaping hand, —— tho' I, then, thought th
Dead ; and for ever loſt to my fond hopes :
Yet, *then*, beneath the altar's ſacred gloom,
I bow'd my ſoul to Zamor : memory
Reliev'd me, with *thy image*, ——— Indians, Spaniards
All, all, have heard, how ardently I lov'd thee.
'Twas my heart's *pride*, to *boaſt* it to the *world* !
To earth, to heaven, —— to Carlos, I proclaim'd it !
And now, ev'n now, in this diſtreſsful moment,
For the *laſt time*, ——I tell THYSELF, I love thee.
Zam. For the *laſt* time ! avert the *menace*, Heaven !
Then thou art once, reſtor'd ——— and loſt for ever !
'Tis not *love's* language, *that* !---'tis death's, Alzira !
Alz. O, Heaven!--Alvarez comes, and with him, Carlos

Enter Don Alvarez, *followed by* Don Carlos.

Alv. See ! thy Alzira with my life's reſtorer !
Approach, young *hero* ! 'tis my *ſon*, who ſeeks thee ;
Spain's *delegate*, who here holds power ſupreme :
My Carlos, bids thee *ſhare* his *bridal* joy.
—— Meet and embrace : *divide* your father's *love* :
My ſon, of *nature*, one ——— and one, of *choice*.
Court his hand, Carlos ?
Zam. PERISH *ſuch a ſon* !
As the DETESTED CARLOS !

Alz.

Alz. Heaven avert
This riſing tempeſt! it o'erwhelms my ſoul!
Alv. What means this WONDER?
Zam. 'Tis not POSSIBLE! ——
No ——I would disbelieve *atteſting Gods*,
Shou'd they, from Heaven, aſſert this *ſhock to nature*;
That ſuch a father——CAN—have ſuch a ſon!
Car. [*To* Zamor.] From what ſtrange ſpring does thy blind *fury* riſe?
Know'ſt thou not *who I am?*
Zam. A thief——a *villain*,
My country's horror——and whole nature's ſhame!
Chief of thoſe ſcourges angry Heaven has doom'd thee,
Know *me*, for Zamor.
Car. THOU, Zamor?
Alv. Zamor!
Zam. Yes——the tortur'd Zamor.
Bluſh to be told it: and *remember*, with it,
The bloody rage of thy remorſeleſs cruelty;
That baſely dar'd inſult a captive King!
Now, he returns —— *triumphant*, in diſtreſs,
To *look* thee into ſhame; to ſee thoſe eyes
Fall their ſtretch'd fierceneſs, and decline before him.
Thou waſter of the world! thou licens'd robber!
Thou whoſe *laſt ſpoil* was my Alzira's *glory!*
Win her, againſt *this ſword*; [*Draws.*] the ſole, *good gain*,
Zamor can boaſt, he *owes* thy haughty country.
Now, the ſame hand, that gave the father *life*,
Claims, in return, the ſon's devoted *blood:*
And, ſo reveng'd, *atones* a dying *realm.*
Alv. Confounded, and amaz'd, I hear him ſpeak;
Till every word grows *ſtranger!*——Carlos cannot
Be guilty——or, if guilty, *cannot anſwer.*
Car. To *anſwer*, were a poorneſs I deſpiſe,
When *rebels* dare accuſe, *power* that replies
Does but forget to *puniſh.*——With this *ſword*,
I *might*, but that I know the reverence, due
To your protecting preſence, *well have anſwered.*
——Madam,

—Madam, [*To* Alzira.] your *heart ſhou'd* have inſtructe
Why you offend me, while I ſee you *here.* [you
If not *my peace*, at leaſt *your fame*, demands
That you now drive this *outlaw* from your thoughts.
You *weep* then! to *inſult* me with your tears?
And, YET, I *love*, and can be *jealous* of you!
*Alz. Cruel!** — and *you*, † my father, and protector
And *thou*! ‖ my ſoul's paſt hope, in happier times!
Mark — and condole my fate. — *Mix* your due pity:
And tremble, at the horror of my woes.
Behold this lover, which my *father* choſe me,
Before I knew there was a world, but *ours.*
With *his* reported *death* our empire fell:
And I have liv'd, to ſee my father's *throne*
O'erturn'd; and all things *chang'd*, in earth, and heav'n
By every *human* help, too ſoon forſaken,
My friendleſs father, from the *Chriſtians* GOD
Sought aid — and ſcreen'd a *ſtate* behind His name.
Thence, forc'd before this *unknown Power*, to kneel,
A dreadful *oath* has bound my backward ſoul,
To *love* the murd'rer of my *real lover!*
In my *new faith*, I own myſelf *un-ſkill'd*,
But, all, that *virtue* taught me, ſtill *I know.*
Zamor, I love thee, juſtly: — I *confeſs* it.
What honour calls for, can *deſerve* NO SHAME.
Yet, where my hand is *bound*, my *heart obeys:*
And I can now be thine, alas, no more.
Let me be rather *wretched*, than *unjuſt.*
Carlos, for *you*, — I am your *wife*; and *victim:*
Yet, in abhorrence of your cruel ſoul,
I hold my mind *divorc'd*; and dare *abjure* you.
One way, to *either*, I ſubmit, with joy:
If your *ſwords* claim me, I am *due* to *both.*
WHICH firſt rewards me with the *death* I *wiſh?*
Carlos, thou haſt a hand by cuſtom ſtain'd:
Thy *practis'd poinard* need not ſtart at blood.

Strike

* *To* Carlos. † *To* Alvarez. ‖ *To* Zamor.

Strike then, for due revenge of flighted love;
And, *puniſhing* the *guilty*,—— ONCE, be juſt.
Car. I find, then, Madam, you wou'd *brave* my weakneſs;
Proud of offending, one who *muſt* forgive.
But, you *invoke* my vengeance, and it *comes*.
Your fate is ready———for, your *minion dies*.
Who waits?———a *guard* there.

Enter Soldiers.

Alz. Cruel, *Chriſtian*, inſult!
Alv. My *ſon!* what mean you? what raſh tranſport this?
Think, *whom* you ſentence.——— Be his perſon hateful,
But, reverence his *virtue*, and his *name*.
He who is, *helpleſs*, in his *hater's* hands,
Claims ſafety, from his *weakneſs*.—— Why, why, Carlos,
Muſt I, a *ſecond* time, remind your mercy?
I gave *you* life:———but Zamor gave it ME.
Be *warn'd*—— nor forfeit fame to feaſt revenge.

Enter Don Alonzo, *with Spaniſh ſoldiers*.

Alon. Pardon an entrance, Sir, thus unprepar'd.
The woods, round bordering on the neighb'ring plain,
Pour out a ſudden ſwarm of Indian *foes*.
Arm'd they advance, as if to ſcale our walls:
And Zamor's name, reſounded, rings to heaven.
Gleamings, from golden bucklers, meet the ſun:
While in firm *line*, and cloſe-compacted march,
The ſtretch'd battalions move, in martial juſtneſs.
They hold ſuch diſcipline, ſuch order'd motion,
As ne'er was known before, to *ſavage* foes.
As *if*, from us, they catch'd new lights of war,
And turn'd the burning leſſons on their teachers.
Car. Away then: let us think 'em worth our meeting.
---Heroes of Spain! ye fav'rite ſons of war!
All corners of the world are yours, to *ſhine* in.
Help me to teach theſe ſlaves to *know* their Lords.

Bring

Bring *him* along, by force.
Zam. Tyrant, they dare not.
Or, are they *Gods*, who *cannot* be repell'd?
And proof againſt the wounds, they ſeek to *give?*
Car. Surround him.
Alz. Spare him, ſave him!
Alv. Son, be *cool:*
And, ſtill, *remember*, what your father owes him.
Car. Sir, I remember, 'tis a ſoldier's duty
To bear down *oppoſition:* ſo *you* taught me.
[Alonzo, *and Spaniſh ſoldiers, ſurround and ſeize* Zamor
Your *pardon*, Sir—I go, where honour calls me.
[*Exit, with* Zamor, *and all the Spaniſh ſoldiers*
Alz. [*to* Alv.] Loſt, at your feet, I fall; your virtue's *claim*
'Tis the firſt *homage* fortune ever taught me.
Grant me the wiſh'd releaſe, of *death's* kind hand,
From miſeries, I *cannot live*, to ſee.
But, dying, let me leave this witneſs with you,
That, true to my firſt vows, I change not *lightly*.
Two different claimers cannot, *both*, poſſeſs
One faithful heart, that will *but once* be given.
Zamor is mine: and I am *only* Zamor's.
Zamor is *virtuous*, as a fancied angel.
'Twas Zamor gave his *life*, to good Alvarez.
Alv. I feel the pity of a father, for thee.
I *mourn* afflicted Zamor: I will *guard* him:
I will protect you, both, unhappy lovers!
Yet, ſtill be mindful of the *marriage tye*,
That, but this morning, bound thy days to Carlos.
Thou art no longer *thine*, my mournful daughter.
Carlos has been too *cruel*; but repents it:
And this once-cruel Carlos is thy huſband.
He is my ſon too: and he loves us, both.
Pity ſoon ſoftens hearts, where *love* has enter'd.
Alz. Ah! why did Heav'n not make you Zamor's father!
Greatneſs thus aweful, ſweetneſs ſo polite,
Is the ſun's *heat*, made lovelier by its *light*.

Oh!

Oh! could the *rigid*, and *self-clos'd*, but know,
How the heart *joys*, that feels another's woe,
No cold-link'd chain's short reach would clog the mind:
But one long wreath of *peace* connect mankind.

ACT IV.

Don Alvarez, Don Carlos.

Shouts, trumpets, a long and lofty flourish.

Alv. DESERVE, my son, this triumph of your arms.
Your numbers, and your courage, have *prevail'd*;
Now, of this last, *best*, effort of the foe,
Half *are no more*; and half are *yours in chains.*
Disgrace not due success, by *undue* cruelty:
But call in *mercy*, to absolve your *fame.*
I will go *visit* the afflicted captives,
And pour compassion on their aking wounds,
Mean while, remember, you are *man*, and *Christian.*
Car. What wou'd your virtue teach my heart to feel?
Alv. Bravely, at once, resolve, to PARDON Zamor.
——Fain wou'd I soften this indocil fierceness:
And teach your courage, how to conquer wills.
Car. At your own choice——freely devote my *life*,
But, leave at liberty my just *revenge.*
Pardon him?—Why, the savage brute is *lov'd!*
Alv. Th' unhappily belov'd most merit pity.
Car. Pity!—Cou'd *I* be *sure* of such reward,
I wou'd *die pleas'd*,——and she shou'd pity *me.*
Alv. How much to be *lamented* is a heart,
At once, by rage of headlong *will* oppress'd,
And by strong jealousies, and doubtings, torn!
Car. When jealousy becomes a crime,--guard, Heav'n,
That husband's *honour*, whom his wife *not loves!*

Your

Your *pity* takes in all the world——but *me.*
Alv. Mix not the bitterneſs of diſtant *fear*
With your *arriv'd* misfortunes.—Since Alzira
Has virtue, it will prove a wiſer care
To ſoften her, for *change*, by patient tenderneſs,
Than, by reproach, *confirm* a willing hate.
Her heart is, like her climate, *rudely ſweet*——
Softneſs will ſooneſt bend a ſtubborn will.
Car. Softneſs!——by all the wrongs of woman
Too much of *ſoftneſs* but invites *diſdain.*
Flatter'd too long, beauty, at length, grows *wan*
And, inſolently ſcornful, *ſlights* its *praiſer.*
Oh! rather, Sir, be jealous for my glory;
And urge my doubting anger, to *reſolve.*
Too *low* already, condeſcenſion *bow'd,*
Nor bluſh'd, to match the *conqu'ror* with the *ſlave*
But, when this ſlave, unconſcious what ſhe *owes,*
Proudly repays humility, with *ſcorn,*
And *braves*, and *hates* the unaſpiring love,
Such love is *weakneſs:*——and ſubmiſſion, *there*
Gives ſanction to contempt, and *rivets* pain.
Alv. Thus, *youth* is, ever, apt to *judge in haſte,*
And loſe the *medium*, in the wild *extreme.*
Do not *repent*, but *regulate*, your paſſion:
Tho' love is *reaſon*, its exceſs is *rage.*
Give me, at leaſt, your promiſe to *reflect*,
In cool, impartial ſolitude: and, ſtill,
No *laſt deciſion*, till we *meet again.*
Car. It is my *father* aſks — and, had I *will*,
Nature denies me *pow'r*, to anſwer, *no.*
I will, in *wiſdom*'s right, ſuſpend my *anger.*
—Yet—*ſpare* my loaded heart:—nor add *more weig*
Leſt my ſtrength *fails* beneath th' *unequal* preſſure.
Alv. Grant yourſelf *time*, and all you want comes w

[

Don Carlos, *alone.*

And——muſt I coldly then, to penſive *piety*,
Give up the livelier *joys* of wiſh'd *revenge?*
Muſt I *repel* the guardian cares of *jealouſy*,
And *ſlacken* ev'ry rein, to *rival love?*
Muſt I reduce my *hopes*, beneath a *ſavage?*
And poorly *envy* ſuch a thing as Zamor!
A *coarſe luxuriance* of ſpontaneous virtue!
A *ſhoot*, of rambling, fierce, *offenſive* freedom:
Nature's *wild* growth—ſtrong, but *un-prun'd*, to bearing:
A rough, raw, *woodman*, of this rugged clime;
Illit'rate in the arts of *poliſh'd life*;
And, who, in Europe, where the *fair* JUDGE beſt,
Wou'd hardly, in our *courts*, attract *diſtinction.*
——She comes!—Alzira comes! averſe,—yet *charming.*

Enter Alzira.

Alz. You *turn*, and *ſhun* me!—*So*, I have been *told*,
Spaniards, by cuſtom,——meet ſubmiſſive *wives.*
——But, *hear* me, Sir:——hear, ev'n a ſuppliant WIFE;
Hear this unguilty object of your *anger*,
One, who can *rev'rence*, tho' ſhe cannot *love* you:
One, who is wrong'd *herſelf*, not injures *you:*
One, who is fall'n ſo low, to *want* your *pity.*
I *cannot* wear DISGUISE: be it th' *effect*
Of *greatneſs*, or of *weakneſs*, in my mind,
My *tongue* cou'd ne'er be mov'd, but by my *heart:*
And *that*——was vow'd, *another's.*——If he *dies*,
The honeſt *plainneſs of my ſoul* deſtroys him.
—You look *ſurpriz'd:*—I will, ſtill *more*, ſurprize you.
I come, to *try* you *deeply*——for, I mean
To move the *huſband*, in the *lover's* favour!
Car. Dare not inſult, too far, a heart, that knows you.
Alz. I had half flatter'd my *unpractis'd* hope,
That you, who govern *others*, ſhou'd, *yourſelf*,

Be

Be temp'rate in the *uſe* of your *own paſſions.*
Nay, I *perſuaded* my *unchriſtian* ign'rance,
That an ambitious *warrior's infelt* pride
Shou'd plead, in *pardon* of *that pride* in *others.*
——*This* I am ſure of, ——that, *forgiving* *mer*
Wou'd ſtamp more influence on our Indian hear
Than can our *gold* on thoſe, of men, like *you.*
Who knows, did ſuch a change endear *your* bre
How far the *pleaſing force* might ſoften *mine?*
Your *right* ſecures you my *reſpect*, and *faith*;
——Strive, for my *love:* ——Strive, for whateve
May charm:——if ought there *is*, *can* charm, lik
——Forgive me: I ſhall be *betray'd* by *fear*,
To *promiſe*, till I over-charge my *pow'r.* ———.
Yet ——*try*, what changes, *gratitude* can make.
A Spaniſh wife, perhaps, wou'd promiſe *more:*
Profuſe in *charms*, and prodigal of *tears*,
Wou'd promiſe *all things* —— *and forget 'em all.*
But *I* have *weaker* charms, and *ſimpler* arts.
Guile-leſs of ſoul, and *left*, as *nature* form'd me,
I err, in honeſt *innocence* of aim,
And, ſeeking to *compoſe*, inflame you *more.*
All I can *add*, is *this:*—unlovely *force*
Shall never bow me to *reward* conſtraint:
But—to what lengths I may be *led*, *by benefits*,
'Tis in *your* pow'r to *try*; not mine to *tell.*
Car. 'Tis *well.*--Since *juſtice* has ſuch pow'r to guide
If you wou'd *follow* duty, *know* it *firſt.*
Count *modeſty*, among your country's *virtues*;
And *copy*——not *condemn*——the wives of Spain.
'Tis your *firſt leſſon*, madam, to FORGET.
———Become more *delicate*, if not more *kind*,
And, never let me *hear*, the name I *hate.*
———You ſhou'd *learn*, *next*, to bluſh away your *ha*
And wait in ſilence, till *my will reſolves*
What *puniſhment*, or *pity*, ſuits his crimes.
—*Know*, *laſt*, that (thus provok'd) a *huſband's* clemenc
Out-ſtretches *nature*, if it pardons——YOU.

Learn

Learn, thence, ungrateful! that I *want not pity:*
And be the *laſt*, to dare believe me *cruel.* [*Exit* Carlos.
Em. Madam, be comforted;——I watch'd his eyes:
I ſee, he *loves*; and love will make him kinder.
Alz. Love has no pow'r to *act*, when chain'd by *jea-*
Zamor muſt *die:* for *I* have aſk'd his *life.* [*louſy.*
Ah! why foreſaw I not that *likely* danger?
Say!——has *thy care* been happier?——*Can'ſt* thou *ſave*
—Haſt thou made *trial* of his *keeper's faith?* [him?
Em. Gold, that, in Spaniſh ſcales, outweighs their *God*,
Has bought his *hand:*——and, all, his *faith*'s your own.
Alz. Then (Heaven be bleſs'd) this metal, *form'd* for
Sometimes, *atones* the wrongs, 'tis dug to *cauſe!* [*crimes*,
——But, we loſe time:——why doſt thou ſeem to *pauſe?*
Em. I cannot think they *purpoſe* Zamor's *death.*
Alvarez has not loſt his *pow'r* ſo far,
Nor can the *Council*——
Alz. They are Spaniards, all.
Mark the proud, *partial*, guilt of theſe *vain* men!
Ours, but a country, *held*, to yield *them*, SLAVES;
Who reign, our *Kings*, by right of *diff'rent clime!*
Zamor, mean while, by birth, *true* Sov'reign here,
Weighs but a *rebel*, in *their* righteous ſcale!
Oh!——*civiliz'd* aſſent, of ſocial *murder*!
——But, why, Emira, ſhould this ſoldier *ſtay?*
Em. You may *expect* him inſtantly.——The *night*
Methinks grown darker, *veils* your bold deſign.
Wearied by ſlaughter, and unwaſh'd from blood,
The world's proud *ſpoilers*, now, lie huſh'd, in *ſleep.*
Alz. Away, and find this Spaniard.——Guilt's bought
Opening the priſon, innocence goes free. [hand
Em. See!—by Cephania led, he *comes*, with Zamor.
——Be *cautious*, Madam, at ſo *dark* an hour,
Leſt, *met*——ſuſpected *honour* ſhould be loſt:
And modeſty, *miſtaken*, ſuffer *ſhame.*
Alz. What does thy ill-taught fear miſtake, for *ſhame?*
Virtue, at *midnight*, walks, as *ſafe*, *within*,
As in the conſcious glare of *flaming day.*

She who in *forms* finds virtue, has *no virtue*.
All the *ſhame* lies, in *hiding* honeſt love.
——— *Honour*, alien phantom, here call'd pr
Lends but a length'ning *ſhade*, to *ſetting virtu*
Honour's not love of *innocence*, but *praiſe*!
The fear of *cenſure*, not diſtaſte of *ſin*!
———But, *I* was taught in a *ſincerer* clime,
That virtue, tho' it *ſhines* not, ſtill, is virtue
And heart-felt honour grows not, but *within*.
This *my* heart *knows*: and, knowing, bids me
Shou'd *Heav'n* forſake the *juſt*, be bold, and *f*

Enter Zamor, *with* Cephania, *and a Spaniſh*

Zam. For what new torment haſt thou call'd
Alz. Ah! *fly*——thy hopes are *loſt*; thy fate
Eſcape, this moment, or thou ſtay'ſt to *die*.
Haſte,——loſe no time——*be gone*: this guardian
Will teach thee to deceive the murd'rers hope.
——Reply not,——judge thy ſtate, from *my*
Save, by thy *flight*, the man I love, from *death*
The man, whom I have *ſworn t' obey* from *blood*
And a loſt world, that knows thy worth, from
Thy country calls thee: night conceals thy ſtep
Pity *thy* fate:——and leave me, to *my own*.
Zam. Thou *robber's property*! thou Chriſtian's
Thou! who dar'ſt *love* me——yet, can'ſt bid me
If I *muſt* live, come *thou*, and make life *tempting*
But, 'twas a *cruel wiſh*!——I cannot *ſhield* th
Stript of my pow'r and friends, and *nothing left*
But *wrongs* and *miſery*!——I have no *dower*,
To bribe *reluctant* love.——All thou canſt ſhare,
With *me*, will be—my *deſart*,—and my *heart*.
When I *had more*, I laid it at *thy feet*.
Alz. Ah! what are *crowns*, that muſt no more b
I lov'd, *not pow'r*, but *thee*: thy ſelf once *loſt*,
What has an *empty world*, to tempt my ſtay?
Far in the depth of thy ſad deſarts, trac'd,

My *heart* will *ſeek* thee; *fancy*, there, miſleads
My weary, wand'ring ſteps: there, *horror* finds
And preys upon, my ſolitude: there, leaves me,
To languiſh life out, in *unheard* complaints:
To waſte, and wither, in the *tearleſs winds:*
And die, with *ſhame*, at breach of plighted *faith*,
For being *only thine* ——— and, yet, *another's.*
—Go——carry with thee both my *peace* and *life:*
And leave (ah wou'd thou cou'dſt) thy ſorrows, *here.*
I have my *lover*, and my *fame*, to *guard:*
And I will *ſave* 'em both. ——— *Be gone—for ever.*

Zam. I hate this *fame*, falſe avarice of *fancy!*
The ſickly *ſhade* of an *unſolid* greatneſs!
The lying *lure* of pride, that Europe *cheats* by!
Periſh the groundleſs *ſeemings* of their virtue!
But, ſhall *forc'd* oaths, at hated *Chriſtian* altars,
Shall Gods, who *rob* the Gods of our *forefathers*,
Shall *theſe*—obtrude a *lord*, and blaſt a *lover!*

Alz. Since it was *ſworn*—or to *your* Gods, or *theirs*,
What *help* is *left* me?

Zam. None—adieu—for ever. [*Going.*

Alz. Stay.—What a farewel, *this? Return*, *I charge* thee.

Zam. [*Returning.*] Carlos, perhaps, will *hear* thee.

Alz. Ah! *pity* rather
Than thus *upbraid* my wretchedneſs.

Zam. Think, then,
On our paſt *vows.*

Alz. I think of nothing, *now*,
But of *thy* danger.

Zam. Oh! ——— thou haſt undone
The *tend'reſt* ——— *fondeſt* ——— *lover!*

Alz. Still, I *love*,
Crime as it is, I *love* thee. ——— Leave me, Zamor,
Leave me, *alone* to *die.*—HA! CRUEL! tell me!
What horrible *deſpair*, revolving wildly,
Burſts from thy *eyes*, with purpoſe more than mortal?

Zam. It SHALL be ſo. [*Going.*

Alz. What *wou'dſt* thou?——Whither *go'ſt* thou?
[*Holding him.*

Zam. To make a proper *uſe* of *unhop'd* freedom
Alz. By Heav'n! if 'tis to death, I'll *follow* the
Zam. *Horrors* unmix'd with LOVE, demand m
Leave me——Time flies. Night blackens. Dut
Soldier, attend my ſteps. [*Exit*
Alz. Alas, Emira!
I faint——I die——in what ungovern'd ſtart
Of ſome raſh thought, he left me! *Haſte* Emira,
Watch his fear'd meaning——trace his fatal footſ
And——if thou ſeeſt him *ſafe*, return, and *bleſs*
[*Exit*
——A black, preſaging, ſorrow ſwells my heart!
What could a day, like this, produce, but *woe?*
Oh!——thou! dark, aweful, vaſt, myſterious
Whom *Chriſtians worſhip*, yet, *not comprehend!*
If, ignorant of thy new laws, I *ſtray*,
——Shed from thy diſtant *heav'n*, where-e'er it ſ
One ray of *guardian light*, to clear my way:
And teach me, firſt to *know*, then *act* THY WILL
But, if my only *crime* is——love of Zamor,
If that offends thine eye, and claims thy anger:
Pour thy due vengeance on my hopeleſs head;
For, I am, *then*, a wretch, *too loſt*, for MERCY.
Yet---be the wand'rer's *guide*, amidſt his *deſarts*
Greatly diſpenſe thy *good* with *equal* hand;
Nor, partial *to* the partial, give Spain, *all.*
Thou canſt not be confin'd to *care* of PARTS;
Heedleſs of *one* world, and the *other's* FATHER:
Vanquiſh'd, and victors, are *alike*, to THEE:
And all our vain diſtinctions MIX, *before* thee.
---Ah! what foreboding *ſhriek!---again!* and *loud*
Oh Heav'n! amidſt the wildneſs of that ſound,
I heard the name of Zamor!——Zamor's dead!
Hark!---a *third* time!---and, now, the mingled
Come *quick'ning* on my *ear!*

Enter Emira, *frighted.*

—— Emira, SAVE me.
What has he *done?* ——In pity of my fears,
Speak, ——and beſtow ſome *comfort.*
Em. Comfort is *loſt:*
And all the rage of death has, ſure, poſſeſs'd him.
——Firſt, he *chang'd habit,* with the trembling ſoldier.
Then ſnatch'd his *weapon* from him.—The robb'd wretch
Flew, frighted, tow'rd the *gate*;---while furious Zamor,
Wild, as the fighting rage of *wintry winds,*
Ruſh'd to the public *hall,* where ſits the *Council.*
Following, I ſaw him *paſs* the ſleeping guards:
But *loſt* him, when he *enter'd.*——In a moment,
I heard a ſound of voices cry, *He's dead;*
Then, *clam'rous calls,* from ev'ry ſide at once,
To arms, to arms!——Ah! Madam, ſtay, not *here;*
Fly, to the *inmoſt rooms,* and ſhun the *danger.*
Alz. No, dear Emira: rather, let us try,
Whether our weakneſs may not find ſome means,
Late, and unlikely as it is,——*to ſave him.*
I, too, *dare* DIE.
Em. They *come.*——Protect us, Heav'n!

Enter Don Alonzo.

Alon. Madam, you ſtir no farther.——I have orders,
To ſeize your perſon:——'Tis a charge, *unwiſh'd.*
Alz. Whence doſt thou come? What *fury* ſent thee [*hither?*
What is become of Zamor?
Alon. At a *time,*
So full of *danger* my reſpect gives way,
To duty.——You muſt pleaſe to *follow me.*
Alz. Oh, Fortune! Fortune! this is *too ſevere!*
Zamor is DEAD: and *I* am *only* CAPTIVE!
---Why doſt THOU weep? What have a Spaniard's tears
To do with *woes,* which none but Spaniards cauſe?
Wrong'd to diſtaſte of life, come *death!* and ſhow
Some ſafe, tho' *dark* retreat, for weary woe.

Heav'n is too juſt, when, *here*, diſtreſs purſu'
To ſee, in life to come, paſt pangs renew'd.
There, ſmiles the ſoul, eſcap'd from all its pain
There, ſorrow meets reward; and *triumphs* rei

ACT V.

ALZIRA, *guarded.*

WHEN ſhall I die? Anſwer, ye *dumb* deſt
Ye bold provokers of inſulted Heav'n!
Who, when you mean to *murder*, ſay, you *judg*
Why does your brutal *ſilence* leave my ſoul
Flutt'ring, 'twixt hope and fear, in tort'ring *dou*
Why am I *not inform'd* of Zamor's *fate?*
They will not *ſpeak!* no matter, ſince I *hope*
To *hear no good*; why ſhou'd I *hear*, *at all?*
The conduct of theſe watchful *mutes* is *ſtrange!*
They ſeize me, guard me, and confine me, *here*
Yet *anſwer nothing*, but with *looks* of *hate!*
Chancing, but now, to ſigh my Zamor's name,
Theſe frighted monſters, ſtruck with Spaniſh *env*
Started, turn'd *pale*; and *trembled*, at the ſound!

Enter Ezmont.

Alas!——— my father, too?
Ezm. To what dark depth
Of ſad *deſpair* haſt thou reduc'd us all?
See now, the *fruits* of thy unliſt'ning love!
Alz. What have I done? and what has Zamor ſu
Ezm. Ev'n in the inſtant, while, with growing
We pleaded, earneſt, for thy lover's life;
While we *yet hung*, on the *half-granted* pray'r;
An ent'ring *ſoldier* drew our notes tow'rd him.

'Twas Zamor!---dreadful in a *borrow'd* dreſs!
At once, he hurl'd his furious EYES, amongſt us,
And his more furious PERSON. Scarce I *ſaw*,
So rapid was his motion, that his *hand*
Held a *drawn ſword!*---To enter---reach our *ſeats*,
And, lion-like, ſpring to the breaſt of Carlos.
Th' *aſſault*, the *wound*, the *death*, was, all, *one moment!*
Out-guſh'd your *huſband's* blood, to ſtain the *father:*
As if 'twou'd lend him *bluſhes*, for the *daughter!*
---Zamor, mean while, the dreadful action *done*,
Soft'ning to ſudden *calmneſs*, at the feet
Of ſad Alvarez *fell:* and, to *his* hand,
Reſign'd the *ſword*, which his ſon's blood made *horrid.*
The *father* ſtarted into *back'ning* terror!
The *murd'rer* daſh'd his boſom on the *ground*,
I *but reveng'd* (he cry'd) my wrongs, and ſhame!
I knew MY duty---know your own, againſt me:
Nature *your* motive, hard oppreſſion *mine.*
He ſaid no more:---but, *proſtrate*, *hop'd* his doom.
Alz. Let me not hear the reſt:---'tis, all, too dreadful.
Ezm. Th' afflicted *father* ſunk upon my boſom.
Night's ſilent ſhade grew vocal with our *cries.*
From ev'ry ſide at once, *ſwarm* following *ſwarm*,
A flow of fruitleſs *help* ſurrounded Carlos;
To ſtop th' *out-ſwelling* blood, and *hold back* life.
---But what moſt ſhakes me, tho' 'tis *told* thee, *laſt*,
Is---that they think *thee* guilty of his *death*;
And, inſolently *loud*, demand *thy own.*
Alz. But,—— *can* you ———
Ezm. No. IMPOSSIBLE. I *cannot.*
I know thy heart too well, to *wrong* thy virtue.
I know thee, too, too capable of *weakneſs*;
But *not* of *purpos'd blood.* ——*I ſaw* this danger.
But, thy charm'd eyes, ev'n on the brink of fate,
Were blinded by thy *love*; ——and thou art *fall'n!*
—Thy huſband murder'd, by thy lover's hand!
The *Council* that accuſes, will *condemn* thee:
And *ignominious death* becomes thy doom.

I came to warn thee, and *prepare* thy ſpirit.
Now, haſt'ning back, try ev'ry hope, for *pardon*;
Or, failing to *redeem* thee, *ſhare* thy death.
Alz. My *pardon!*—Pardon, at theſe murd'rers
The King, my *father*, ſtoop his pray'r to THEM!
Death, if it hides me from *that thought*, is *rapture*.
---Ah! Sir, *live on:* hope ſtill ſome *happier* day;
Then, pay back all theſe *pangs*,---and bleſs Peru.
Wait that determin'd hour---and love Alzira;
This all the *pray'r* ſhe *makes*, this all, ſhe *wiſhes*.
Ezm. But is no pity due to dying Carlos?
Alz. I find his fate *too cruel:* and muſt mourn
Thro' fear, that he *deſerv'd* it.——As for Zamor,
Whoſe raſhneſs has reveng'd his *country's* wrongs,
Urg'd by too keen remembrance of *his own*,
I neither *cenſure*, nor *excuſe*, his daring.
I wou'd have *ſtaid* him: but, he *ruſh'd to die*;
And 'tis not in my *choice*, to *live*, *without him*.
Ezm. Shed thy wiſh'd mercy *here*, All-pow'rful!

Alz. [*Alone*] My weeping *father* call'd on *Heav'n*, to,
I will not taſk the grace of Heav'n *ſo boldly:*
Let me not be at all——and I'm not *wretched*.
Th' *Almighty Chriſtian Pow'r*, that knows me *innoc*
Exacts (they ſay) long *life* in deep diſtreſs;
And thunders at the brave, who *ſhorten* woe.
The *Gods* who once were mine, were leſs *ſevere*;
Why ſhou'd the *wretch*, unhoping, ſtruggle on,
Thro' *viewleſs* lengths of *miſerable* woe,
Yet, *dread* the hand of *death*, that points to *refuge*.
Sure! *Chriſtians*, in this tale, *belye* their God.
His *fav'rites*, whom he arms with his own *thunder*
Can *they* have *right*, from HIM, to waſte a world,
To ſweep whole millions into *death's* cold arms;
And, ſhall not *I* for reſt and *ſafety*, claim
A pow'r he gives to *them*, for pride and *rage?*
—Ah!—Zamor *comes!* they lead him out, to *die!*

Enter Zamor, *in chains: guarded by* Spaniards.

Zam. Kind, in their purpos'd malice, they have brought me,
Where my expiring ſoul ſhall *mix* with *thine*.
Yes, my Alzira, we are doom'd, *together*.
Their *black tribunal* has condemn'd us, *both*:
For innocence offends, where guilt is judge.
But Carlos is *not dead!*---THAT wounds me deepeſt.
Carlos ſurvives, to boaſt ſhort *triumph* o'er us:
And dies ſo ſlowly, that *our fate* precedes him!
---Yet, he MUST die: my hand *not err'd ſo far*,
But he *muſt die*: and, when he *does*, my ſoul
Shall ſnatch th' expected moment, hov'ring, watchful,
And *hunt* him, in *revenge*, from ſtar to ſtar.
Pious Alvarez, mournful, comes, behind,
Charg'd with our bloody *ſentence*, ſign'd, in council,
That *murder* may be *ſanctify'd*, by *form*.
My only *grief* is,---that *thou* dy'ſt, for ME.

Alz. That, that, ſhou'd leave thy grief *without* complaint.
Since I am lov'd, and love,---to die with Zamor,
Is happineſs and triumph.---Bleſs my fate;
No blow but this cou'd break my endleſs chain.
Think, then, this period of ſuppos'd *diſtreſs*,
This moment, that *unites* our hands in *death*,
Is the *firſt* ſhielder of my love from *woe*.
Now, ſmiling fate *reſtores* me to *myſelf*:
And I can give a heart, once more, *my own*.
But there's a cauſe for *tears*,---ALVAREZ claims 'em:
We, while *he* ſpeaks OUR doom, ſhall *feel*, but HIS.

Zam. See! how the ſlow-pac'd mourner *weeps* his errand.

Enter Alvarez.

Alz. Which, of us three, does fortune, *moſt*, diſtreſs?
What an *aſſemblage* ours, of mingled woes!

Zam. Since Heav'n *will have* it ſo, that, from *thy* tongue,
I ſhould receive *death's ſummons*, let it *come*:

'Twill

'Twill have *one* pow'r to *pleaſe*;---for I ſhall HE
Do not, then, *pity*; but condemn me boldly;
And, if thy heart, tho' Spaniſh, bends beneath it
Think, thou but doom'ſt an unſubmitting *ſavage*
Who *kill'd* thy *ſon*—becauſe *unlike* his father.
But, what has poor Alzira done? perhaps,
She dies, becauſe, in her, a *people* lives!
In her, *alone*, glows that *collected ſoul*,
That, in paſt ages, brighten'd *all* Peru!
But excellence is guilt, where enviers judge?
Alz. Wond'rous old *Virtue!* obſtinately *kind!*
Thou, *ſingly juſt*, amidſt a *race* of *thieves!*
'Twere to be baſe as *they* are, cou'd I ſtoop
To *deprecate* a vengeance *duly thine*.
For thy *ſon*'s blood, be mine thy *willing* ſacrific
All I require, is—*but* defence from *ſlander*;
From poor *ſuſpicion* of a guilt I *ſcorn*.
Carlos, tho' *hated*, was a hated *huſband*:
He was Alvarez' *ſon*, too; and, as *ſuch*,
Call'd for that *rev'rence*, which *himſelf* deſerv'd not
As for thy *nation*, let 'em *praiſe* or *blame* me,
Thy witneſs *only* can be worth my claim.
Mourn not my *death*, 'tis *joy*, to die, with Zamor:
And all the *pain* I ſuffer, — is, *for* THEE.
Alv. Words *will* have way: or *grief*, ſuppreſs'd in
Wou'd *burſt* its paſſage, with th' *out-ruſhing ſoul*.
What ſorrows ever match'd this mingled ſcene
Of *tenderneſs* and *horror!* — my ſon's *murd'rer*
Is Zamor! ——He, who guarded *me*, *from murd*
Is, alſo, Zamor! hold *that* image, *faſt*.
Afflicted *nature!*—LIFE, *unwiſh'd*, by *me*,
Is *due*, to Zamor: young, belov'd, untry'd
In hope's falſe failings, joys may make *him* happy.
My *taſte* of *time* is GONE: and life, to *me*,
Is but an ev'ning's walk, in *rain* and *darkneſs*.
Father I *am* (at leaſt, I *was*, a father:)
But every father, firſt, was form'd, a MAN.
And, ſpite of nature's call, that cries for *vengeance*,

The voice of *gratitude* muſt *ſtill* be *heard*.
Oh! *thou*, ſo late my *daughter!* thou! whom, *yet*,
'Spite of theſe *tears*, I call by that lov'd name!
Miſtake not my *purſuit*.—I cannot wiſh
Thoſe horrible *reliefs*, that riſe, from *blood*.
It ſhocks me, thro' a ſoul, that *feels*, for *three*;
Hard ſtroke of juſtice! thus, to loſe, at once,
My *daughter*, my *deliverer*, and my *ſon*.
The *Council*, with miſguided view to *ſooth* me,
Ill choſe *my* tongue, to tell their dreadful will.
True, I receiv'd the charge: for, I had *weigh'd* it,
And found it *not impoſſible*, to *ſave* you:
Zamor might make it *eaſy*.
Zam. Can *I?* tell me:
Can Zamor ſave Alzira?——Quickly *tell* me:
How?——By *what* length of torments? and, 'tis *done*.
Alv. Caſt off thy *idol gods:* and *be* a *Chriſtian*.
Zam. That were deſerving death, through fear of dying.
Alv. That ſingle change reverſes all our fates.
Kind to the *courted* ſouls of pagan *converts*,
We have a *law*, remits their body's *doom*.
This latent law, by Heaven's peculiar mercy,
Points out a *road*, and gives a *right* to PARDON.
Religion can diſarm a *Chriſtian's anger*.
Thy blood becomes a *brother's*, ſo converted,
And with a *living* ſon, repays a *dead*.
Prevented vengeance, *ſeiz'd* in her deſcent,
So reſts, ſuſpended, and declines to *fall*.
From *thy* new faith, Alzira draws new life;
And *both* are happy *here*, and bleſs'd *hereafter*.
Why art thou *ſilent?* Is the taſk ſo *hard*,
That adds *eternal* life, to life, below?
Speak——from *thy choice*, determine *my relief*.
Fain wou'd I owe thee *yet a ſecond* being.
Thou *robb'ſt* me of my life: reſtore one, to me.
A childleſs father wiſhes THEE *to live*.
Alzira is a *Chriſtian:* be *thou* ſo.
'Tis all the *recompence*, my wrongs will *urge*.

Zam. [*To Alz.*] *Shall we*, thou faireſt, nobleſt, boaſt of beauty!
Shall we, *ſo far*, indulge our *fear to die?*
Shall the ſoul's baſeneſs bid the body *live?*
Shall Zamor's *Gods* bow to the *Gods of* Carlos?
Why wou'd Alvarez bend me, down, to *ſhame?*
Why wou'd he, thus, become the *ſpirit's* tyrant?
Into how ſtrange a *ſnare* am I impell'd!
Either Alzira *dies*, or lives, to *ſcorn* me!
Tell me,—when Fortune gave thee to *my power*,
Had I, at *ſuch a purchaſe*, held thy life,
Tell me, with honeſt truth,—*wou'dſt* thou have *bought* it?

Alv. I ſhou'd have *pray'd* the Power, I *now* implore,
To widen, for his *truth*, a heart like *thine:*
Dark as it is, yet, *worthy* to be *Chriſtian.* [*thee.*

Zam. [*To Alz.*] *Death* has no *pain*, but what I feel for
Life has no pow'r to charm, but what *thou* giv'ſt it.
THOU, then, that *art* my *ſoul*, vouchſafe to *guide* it.
But, *think!*—*remember*, ere thou bid'ſt me *chuſe!*
'Tis on a *matter*, of more weight than *life*;
'Tis on a *ſubject*, that concerns my *Gods:*
And, all thoſe Gods, in *one*—my dear ALZIRA!
It ruſt it to thy honour,—*ſpeak*—and fix me.
If thou conceiv'ſt it *ſhame*, thou wilt *diſdain* it.

Alz. Then, *hear* me, Zamor.—My unhappy father
Diſpos'd my willing *heart*, 'twixt *Heaven* and *thee:*
The *God* he choſe, was *mine:*—thou may'ſt, perhaps,
Accuſe it, as the *weakneſs* of my youth:
But, *'twas not ſo.* My ſoul, enlarg'd, and clear,
Took in the *ſolemn light* of Chriſtian truth.
I ſaw,—at leaſt, I *thought I ſaw*, conviction.
And, when my *lips* abjur'd my country's Gods,
My ſecret *heart* confirm'd the change, *within.*
But, had I *wanted* that directive *zeal*,
Had I *renounc'd* my Gods, yet ſtill *believ'd* 'em;
That—had not been an *error*, but a baſeneſs.
That had been *mocking* Heaven's whole hoſt, at once;
The Powers I *quitted*, and the Power I *choſe.*

A change

A change like *that*, had err'd *beyond* the *tongue*;
And taught the ſilent, ſervile *ſoul*, to *lye*.
I cou'd have wiſh'd, that faith had lent thee *light*,
But ſince it did not, —— let thy *virtue* guide thee.

Zam. I *knew* thy gen'rous choice before I *heard* it.
Who, that can *die with thee*, wou'd ſhun ſuch death,
And *live*, to his own infamy? —— *Not* Zamor.

Alv. Stubborn deſtroyers of *yourſelves* and *me!*
Whom honour renders *blind*, and virtue *cruel!*

[*A dead march.*

Hark!---the time preſſes.—Theſe are ſounds of *ſorrow*.

Enter Don Alonzo, *followed by a mix'd croud of* Spaniards, *and* Americans, *mournfully*. Ezmont.

Alon. We bring, obedient to his *laſt* command,
Our dying captain, your unhappy ſon,
Who *lives* no longer, than to *reach* your boſom.
A furious crowd of his lamenting friends
Preſs, to attend him, and *revenge* his blood.

Enter Don Carlos: *brought in by* Spaniſh *ſoldiers, and ſurrounded by a number of followers, ſome of whom advance, to ſeize* Alzira.

Zam. [*Interpoſing.*] Wretches! keep diſtance. —— Let Alzira live:
Mine was the ſingle *guilt*, —— be mine the *vengeance*.

Alz. Be *feaſted*, ye officious *hounds* of *blood:*
Guiltleſs or guilty, 'tis my *choice*, to *die*.

Alv. My ſon! my dying ſon! —— this *ſilent paleneſs*,
This look, *ſpeaks for* thee, and forbids all *hope*.

Zam. [*To D.* Car.] Even to the *laſt* then, thou maintain'ſt thy *hate?*
Come—— *ſee* me *ſuffer:* mark my *eye:* and *ſcorn* me,
If my expiring ſoul confeſſes *fear*.
Look---and be taught, at leaſt, to *die*---by Zamor.

Car.

Car. [*To Zam.*] I have no *time* to copy out thy virtues:
But, there are ſome of *mine*, I come to *teach* thee.
I *ſhou'd*, in *life*, have given thy pride *example:*
Take it (too late) in *death:* and mark it, *well.*
[*To Alv.*] *Sir*, my departing ſpirit *ſtaid* its journey,
Firſt, till my eyes might leave their beams in *yours*;
And their dim lights *expire* amidſt your *bleſſing.*
Next, what *you* taught me, 'tis my taſk to *ſhow*,
And die, the *ſon* of your paternal *virtue.*
——— Eager in *life*'s warm race, I never *ſtopp'd*,
To look *behind* me, and *review* my way.
But, at the *goal*, before I judg'd it *near*,
I ſtart, ——— and recollect forgotten *ſlidings.*
On the *grave*'s ſerious *verge*, I turn, ——— and *ſee*
Humanity effac'd, to cheriſh *pride:*
Heaven has reveng'd the earth——and Heav'n is *juſt!*
Cou'd my own blood but expiate all I *ſhed*,
All, my raw ſword has drawn, from ſuff'ring innocence,
I ſhou'd lie down in duſt, ——— and reſt in *peace.*
Cheated by proſp'rous fortune, *death* deals plainly;
But——I have *learnt to live*, when life *forſakes* me.
Safe and *forgiven*, be the hand I fall by.
Power is, yet, *mine*: and it *abſolves* my murder.
Live, my proud enemy; and live, in *freedom.*
Live, ——— and *obſerve*, tho' *Chriſtians* oft *act ill*,
They muſt *forgive* ill actions, in another.
——*Ezmont*, my friend! and *you*, ye friendleſs Indians!
Subjects, not *ſlaves!* be rul'd, henceforth, *by* LAW.
Be grateful to my *pity*, tho' 'twas *late*;
And teach your country's Kings, to *fear no longer.*
——*Rival*, learn, hence, the diff'rence, 'twixt our *Gods:*
Thine have inſpir'd thee to *purſue revenge:*
But, *mine*, when *that revenge* had reach'd my *life*,
Commands me to *eſteem*, and give thee *pardon.*

Alv. Virtues like *theſe*, my ſon, ſecure *thy peace:*
But *double* the *diſtreſs* of *us*, who loſe thee.

Alz. Of all the *painful wonders* thou haſt caus'd me,

This

This *change*, this *language*, will afflict me, moſt!
Zam. *Die*, *ſoon*, or LIVE FOR EVER. ——If thou, *thus*,
Goſt on, to charm my *anger* into *envy*,
I ſhall repent, I was not born, a *Chriſtian*,
And *hate* the *juſtice*, that compell'd my blow!
Car. I will go *farther*, *yet*; ——— I will not *leave* thee,
Till I have ſoften'd *vengeance* into *friendſhip*.
—Mournful Alzira has been *too unhappy*:
Lov'd, to *diſtreſs*, and married to *misfortune*!
I wou'd do ſomething, to *atone* her wrongs:
And, with a *ſofter ſenſe*, imprint her *pity*.
Take her ——and owe her, to the hand ſhe *hates*.
Live, ——and remember me, without a *curſe*.
Reſume loſt empire, o'er your conquer'd ſtates:
Be friends to Spain;—nor enemies to Carlos.
[*To Alv.*]--Vouchſafe *my* claim, Sir, to *this ſon*, this *daughter*:
And *be*, both *father*, and *protector* here.
May Heaven, and you, be *kind*! and they be--*Chriſtians*!
Zam. I ſtand *immoveable*——confus'd!——aſtoniſh'd!
If theſe are *Chriſtian* virtues, *I* am *Chriſtian*.
The *faith*, that can *inſpire* this gen'rous *change*,
Muſt be *divine*——and glows *with all its God*!
—Friendſhip, and conſtancy, and right, and pity,
All *theſe* were leſſons, I had learnt *before*.
But, this *unnat'ral* grandeur of the ſoul
Is *more* than mortal: and out-reaches *virtue*.
It draws——it charms——it *binds* me, to be *Chriſtian*.
It bids me *bluſh*, at my remember'd *raſhneſs*:
Curſe my revenge——and pay thee *all my love*.
[*Throws himſelf at his feet.*
Alz. A *widow'd* wife, bluſhing to be *thus late*,
In her *acknowledgment* of tender *pity*;
Low, at your injur'd feet, with proſtrate heart,
[*Kneels with* Zamor.
Weeps your untimely death: and thanks your goodneſs.
——Torn, by contending paſſions, I *want power*,
To *ſpeak* a thouſand truths, I *ſee* you *merit*:

But,

But, honour, and confeſs,——your greatneſs, *wrong*
Car. Weep not, Alzira——I forgive, *again.*
———For the *laſt* time, my *father!* lend your boſom
Live, to be *bleſs'd!*——and make Alzira *ſo.*
Remember, Zamor,---that a *Chriſtian*---Oh! [*Di*
Alv. [*To Ezm.*] I ſee the *hand of Heaven* in our misfc
But, *juſtice* ſtrikes: and *ſuff'rers* muſt ſubmit. [tur
Woes are *good counſellors:* and, kindly, *ſhow,*
What *proſp'rous* pride diſdains to let us *know.*
While in triumphant ſwell, on *joy's* light ſtream,
Down dance our wanton hopes, thro' life's gay dream
No *care* alarms, no cool *reflection* ſhakes:
But all one pleaſure, all one madneſs, makes.
Not ſo, when *ſorrow's* bitter taſte is known!
Then, graft we ſighs, for others, on our *own.*
Then, the mind widening, takes in ſenſe, of all:
And *Pardon's* voice we hear; and *Pity's* call.

SAUL

SAUL:

A

TRAGEDY.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Saul. BE dumb, vain boy!—nor force a ſoldier's bluſh:
A *King*'s I name not:—for, thy recreant blood
Stagnates, too cold, to *feel* a Monarch's fires.——
Born, with a ſupple, an un-mounting, ſoul,
Daring, yet *dull!* and, without *motive*, brave!—
Un-jealouſly, *ſupporting*, even the hand,
That *bars* thee from a throne!—by birth, indeed,
Thy claim: but, *punily*, *reſign'd*, to *fondneſs*,
For one, whoſe *guilt*, thy blindneſs wou'd *protect*,
To hunt thy father's life, and ſhame thy own!
Jonath. Far from my heart, with humbleſt duty fill'd,
Be every thought that gives a *father* pain.
Oh!—by thoſe virtues, which (uncrown'd) had *reign'd*,
And owe no *honours* to a *reſcued throne!*
Diſtruſt not him, whoſe inmoſt ſoul I've *ſearch'd*,
And find it ſtamp'd for virtue!—Jonathan
Scarce, more, avow'd your *ſon*, than ——
Saul. For thy *life*,
Breathe not the traitor's *name.*
Jonath. I MUST *not*, NOW.—
Yet,—but your frown *prevented*——I might, *elſe*,
Perhaps, *unwarily*, have judg'd him *wrong'd:*
Perhaps, have *added*,—(had the King not *frown'd*)
That, tho' far *fall'n*, himſelf, his *faith* ſtands *firm:*

His loyalty *un-match'd*, as, when, *alone*,
Un-arm'd, he *dar'd*, beyond an *army*'s power!——
When, *charg'd* with *trophies*, from that *wretch* of GAT
Modeſt, he met, your *joy*, and *wonder*, mix'd;
And *bluſh'd*, beneath the *juſtice* of your praiſe!
Saul. I ſee, nor ſee, *diſpleas'd*, thy gen'rous aim:
That, to diſarm my vengeance, wou'd *re-call*
The triumphs of his *hand*, whoſe *heart* I hate.——
Thou art too *weakly partial*, in his cauſe.
Jonath. Yet, *meant* I, to be *juſt*.——
Saul. Ha! *juſt*?——Where,—anſwer me,
Where is the rebel, *now*? this MODEST rebel!
Now, when his bleeding *country* claims his ſword!
When hoſtile Paleſtine, with conqu'ring hand,
O'er Iſrael's mountains, *pours* the *tawny* WAR!
Where is your DAVID, *now*,——your baſe *deſerter*?
Does he not march, enroll'd, th' invader's *guide*?
Heads he not *out-law'd Hebrews*, in their cauſe;
Perverted, all, by *him*? all *rebel braves*!
All, *emulative* of their traitor *chief*?———
Does he not come, *diſcloſed*? a foe, *proclaim'd*?
Blaſting his native *air*! to ſtain the land,
With bloody bluſhes, at *thy friendſhip wrong'd*?
Jonath. Might I preſume?——but—if I err—
Saul. Go on.
I love thy *virtue*:—'tis thy CHOICE, I *ſcorn*.
Jonath. Oh! paſſive *fate*, of friendleſs *miſery*!
Thus, the *unfortunate*, condemn'd, by all,
Hear, what they *ſuffer*, charg'd, as, what they *ſeek*!
Even Saul! imperial Saul! the *wiſe*! the *juſt*!
His country's *guardian*! and his ſubject's *ſoul*!
Even HE!——forgets—that—whom his anger *blames*,
But, from his Sovereign's *darted javelin*, fled!
Saul. He ſhou'd have *ſtaid*; and watch'd *returning peace*.
Another day, perhaps, *my* ſoul, like thine,
Might have *o'er-look'd* th' inſulting ſtamp, of *ſcorn*,
The *leer* of conſcious *hope*, th' exulting *ſcowl*;

That,

That, proudly blaſtful, from the traitor's brow,
Eye'd his ſupplanted lord, and glow'd with joy!
Jonath. Shall then officious *prophets'* erring zeal
Condemn the *guiltleſs?*—*He* nor knew, nor wiſh'd, it:
His humbler thoughts *repell'd* th' unpleaſing hope.
Saul. Periſh thoſe prieſts! whoſe *guilt-anointing* hands
Light up *ambition:* and, beneath the *name*
Of un-concurring *Heav'n*, lodge *grace* in LIES,
To *ſanctify* rebellion!—*So*, was *my* youth
Seduc'd from quiet happineſs!---*ſo*, drawn,
To quit the joys of *independent peace*;
And ſacrifice *retreat*, to pompous *miſery!*
But, when, detective of their *coward frauds*,
When, ſelf-aſſur'd, I *fear'd not* to *forgive*;
When, firm, to *ſpare* the conquer'd, and diſtreſs'd,
I dar'd aſſert the GOD, againſt the PRIEST;
Dar'd *diſbelieve*, that mercy cou'd *offend*,
Or cruelty *delight* him ——— trembling *hypocrites*
Transferr'd *dominion*, to an humbler *upſtart*;
And wrong'd the *power* of *Heav'n* to keep their *own.*

Enter High-Prieſt *melancholy.*

H. Prieſt. Thus, to ENQUIRING SAUL, th' ALMIGHTY ſpeaks.
Saul. Smile, reverend dotard!----ſmile----That GLOOM betrays thee.
Ere thou begin'ſt thy liſt, of lying *woes*,
Know I *fore-judge* 'em.---'Tis not a *Prieſt's virtue*,
To *aid* a power, that *not on Prieſts* depends.
Were the GOD *really yours*, whoſe name you play with,
He wou'd be yours, *but*, while he ſerv'd your ends;
If he *forgave* your *foes*, he *loſt* your *prayers.*
H. Prieſt. Hear, *not my* voice: but, hear, the voice of *Heaven.*
Thus ſays the Great, th' offended, LORD *of* ALL;
" Why ſeek'ſt thou *help* from ME, when my *Commands*
" Preſumptuous, thou haſt broken.—*From thy* houſe

" The forfeit kingdom, *rent*, from faithleſs Saul,
" Is to *another*, given: ———
Saul. Leſſener of *Heaven!*
When I, at Shiloh, ſought thy fruitleſs prayer,
I aſk'd not my *own* fate — my wiſh but glow'd
With warlike warmth, to meet th' invader's powers.
I hop'd, the *fears*, you felt, had *turn'd* your *oracle*,
To WARRANT, *now*, repenting ſubjects duty,
Whom, when *you* found *no call* for their aſſiſtance,
You taught *rebellion*; and diſarm'd the State.
H. Prieſt. U—rim, and Thu—mim, every various rite
Of our myſterious *law*, we tried, in vain:
No anſwering GOD *envoic'd* the ſacred *vail*,
No *ſign* propitious, ſnatch'd th' accepted fire,
'Twas all *blanc ſilence*—all, portentous *gloom*—
The half burnt *offering* ſmoak'd, in *beamleſs* flame,
Drops of cold ſweat bedew'd my lifted hands,
The riſing *pavement* heav'd againſt my foot;
A ſighing *wind*, groan'd, bodeful, from *within*,
The curtains *trembled*, and the lamps *expir'd*.
Jonath. Oh, *horrid!*—deprecate, thou reverend *Seer!*
Th' impending frowns of Heaven — a Monarch, *ſav'd*,
Shall kneel, to thank thy prayer, and *hail* thee, bleſt.
Saul. When ſuppliant *Princes* KNEEL, to pamper'd *Prieſts*,
The *mitre* hides the *crown* — degenerate boy!
Kings, who, *themſelves*, want *props*, ſupport no *State*.—
Abner, yet, mine — and Gilead's captains firm,
With their unſhaken thouſands, aid my cauſe —
Prieſt, let thy trumpets ſound *ſedition's* call,
Mine ſhall riſe, ſhriller, and be heard to Heaven;
For, 'tis thy cauſe, O Heaven! for which I fight.—
Away---go, kneel---pray hard for my deſtruction,
Then, Heaven, *to croſs your hopes*, may bleſs my arms.
H. Prieſt. No—when, from battle, Saul returns, with
Say, by *my* voice, th' *Eternal* never ſpoke — [life.
Then, be the death, *thy* doom, reſerv'd for ME!
Saul. Oh! greatly hinted! all thy curſes fall,
Redoubled, on my head, if thou not dieſt,

A puniſh'd

A puniſh'd traitor, in the army's view,
That day, when I return with conqueſt home.

Enter Abner.

Abner, thou com'ſt, at wiſh—See the *High Prieſt*
Committed to the care of watchful *guards*;
My *victory*, or *death*, decides his fate.
[Abner *nods to two ſoldiers, who ſeize the High Prieſt.*
H. Prieſt. Ah! Prince—What man can do, thy courage will.
But man, againſt his *Maker*, ſtrives in *vain*.——
[*Exit guarded.*
Abner. Let the King live for ever,——let his foes
Fall, and be cruſh'd, beneath his virtues' power,
Till he looks round, upon a ſmiling world,
And every eye, that meets him, *owns* him *Lord.*
Ranging, this morning, o'er the neighbouring hills,
In a high cave, on Endor's craggy ſide,
Deep, in the clifted rock, retir'd from day,
Sleeping, I took this *ſorcereſs*; taught her power,
By oft-hurt ſhepherds, who, in vales, beneath,
Tending their fleecy care, had felt her *ſpleen.*
Saul. Hag! when thou heard'ſt of thy dark *ſiſter*'s fate,
How didſt thou dare to bid thy flattering hope
Cheriſh a thought of *life*, plung'd in an *art*,
Baleful, polluted, horrible, and black,
With myſtic bloodſhed, and with midnight ſpells?
Witch. Oh, ſpare my worthleſs life, a nameleſs wretch
Dependent on a *miſtreſs*, who compels
Th' *infernal powers*, *themſelves*, to ſerve her will,
And chains up *life* and *death*, to wait her call.
Saul. Where does the death-devoted miſchief *dwell?*
Witch. Safe, and far hid, within that dreadful cave,
Lie cells, which ſhadowy *forms*, at midnight, *ſkim*,
Fill'd, with *thin* yellings, and faint ſcreams of *ghoſts*,
Conſtrain'd to meaſure earth's remoteſt bounds,
And rob the *graves* of *Kings*, to feed her *fires.*

Saul. What can her power perform?
Witch What can it *not?*———
If from the front of heaven ſhe *lur'd* the *ſtars*,
The trembling fires, obedient to her charms,
Wou'd, ſwift deſcending, leave their *darken'd* ſphere,
And ſtream new daylight on the wondering world.
Or, if the ſilent realms of ſtarting *Death*
Hear her *known* call, ſtrait, from the burſting *tombs*,
Unbodied *duſt* reſumes the ſummon'd *ſhape*,
And *leaps* to *life*, connected, for *her* aim.
Saul. Abner, my ſoul takes fire! THIS, if ſhe CAN,
Bleſſing my *hope*, ſhe claims my *mercy*, too.——
[*To the Witch.*] Tell me, again—can ſhe compel the *dead*
Jonath. Alas! what dreadful purpoſe ſhakes the King
Saul. Be *huſh'd*—nor intercept th' important ſound.
Witch. Bow'd, o'er a burſting *tomb*, I've ſeen her ſtand
And *breathe new life*, through the unjointed duſt,
Till every atom *heav'd*, with ent'ring *ſoul*.
Saul. As thou would'ſt *live*, CONDUCT me to her *cell*,
And open all its *windings*, to my tread.
Abner. Oh! *think!* dread Sovereign! *think!*—what raſhneſs this!
To truſt th' infernal reach of her *revenge!*
Think, by whoſe late *command*, her partners *fell*,
Think, what a direful *diff'rence* will be found,
'Twixt *mortal* courage, and th' eluſive force
Of SPIRITS, bodileſs, yet cloath'd with *form!*
Saul. Did the bow'd *cedars*, when broad Lebanon
Bends, like the *waving corn*, nor *feel* the WIND.
Now, by that *aweful Pow'r*, which prieſts *profane*,
Which *is*, and *muſt* be, yet *what* none can know,
Which fills all *ſpace*, and glows, in every *ſtar*,
Uncircumſcrib'd by narrow *human* bounds!
Too great for *vengeance*—and too great for *change!*
By the myſterious *darkneſs* of that name,
Whoſe felt idea *fills* (not *frights*) the ſoul,
I will not be withheld. ---- Samuel ſhall RISE:
That proud condemner of his maſter's *mercy!*

That

That *Prince* of *Prieſts!*---that *taſker* of his *God!*---
SAMUEL ſhall RISE; and, from th' all-humbling *grave*,
Forgetful of his *now forſaken* CRAFT,
Tell me the will of *Heaven*, againſt his *own*.
Jonath. May *Heaven* avert th' attempt!
Abner. It is a *thought*,
From which Imagination, ſhuddering back,
Rolls inward, and repels th' advancing blood.
Saul. Teach thy repleniſh'd veins to *boil*, like *mine*;
Call burning *Indignation* to thy aid,
And having felt the PRIEST, *defy* the FIEND.
—Lead on—
Witch. Swear firſt, *this done*, to ſave my *life*.
Saul. Elſe, may that trembling earth his ghoſt ſhall *cleave*,
Swallow *me quick*, while his pale ſpirit's *graſp*
Chills me to death, amidſt his *airy* arms.
[*Going out*, *meets* Jeſſida.
Jeſſid. [*Kneeling.*] Mercy, great King!
Saul. Away---Thy brother's *guilt*
Blots out thy *virtues*---Hold me not---'Tis *Fate*
Now calls me, and I *hear no* IDLE *prayer*.
[*To Jonath.*] *Stay*—thy calm blood would *freeze*, to follow me;
On thy allegiance, I *command* thee, *ſtay*:
Nor, for thy life, preſume to quit the camp———
Love, and the warm embrace of ſmiling beauty,
Befit *thee* better than theſe dauntleſs viſits
To death's dim ſhadows, thro' the midnight *glare*
Of un-embodied *ſeemings*.——Abner, *along*.
[*Exeunt* Saul, Abner, Witch, *and guards*.
Jeſſid. Whither ſo fiercely tends thy angry father?
Jonath. Soul of my life's beſt wiſhes—lovely Jeſſida!
Sweet *ſiſter* of my *friend!* thou *all*, that *nature*
Beſt pleas'd, could form, and all that *art* could poliſh!
He goes, forſaken by the *Prieſts*, and *Heaven*,
To learn his fate from *hags* and *magic* ſpells.
Jeſſid. What fate?--what hags?--what magic can he find?
Methought, th' unhappy Monarch *look'd* diſtraction.
Jonath. He ſeeks, on Endor's ſide, a WITCH's *cave*,

Where, late——

Jeſſid. Ah! ſpeak again——didſt thou ſay *Endor?*

Jonath. Endor, —— my gentle love.

Jeſſid. Then I am *loſt*——

Read *that*——and learn my errand, and my fate.

Jonath. [*Reads.*] 'Hid, among Endor's caves, thi meſſenger

'Will *find* me, with thy anſwer.——Preſs the King

'To join *my* followers to his army's *aid*;

'Divided from the *foe*, we wait his *call*.

——Oh, David!——what a danger to thy *life*;

Or period to thy *virtue!*

Jeſſid. Tell me, Prince,

Have I been *lov'd?* or have thy arts *deceiv'd* me?

Jonath. Why doſt thou *aſk* a truth, thou know'ſt *too well?*

Jeſſid. Oft thou haſt *told* me, that thy willing heart

Sigh'd for ſome ſoft *command*, to prove my power.

Jonath. Oh! ſnatch me, *Death!* for ever, from theſe *eyes*,

When I diſpute thy will.—— Reſiſtleſs *innocence*

Smiles, at thy harmleſs heart; and each ſoft *wiſh*

Is *whiten'd*, in its *riſing*.

Jeſſid. Let thy feet,

Swifter than eagles, (thou art fam'd for *ſpeed*,

And *firſt* in every race of *love* and *virtue*)

Let thy befriending feet make haſte, and ſave him.

Jonath. Alas! thou heardſt the twice renew'd *command*,

The *Father*, and the *King*—have fix'd me *here*.

Jeſſid. Go—there is nothing in this world but *wrongs*.

Oh, Jeſſida! deceiv'd, unhappy, Jeſſida!

Since *he* is falſe, there ne'er was truth in *man*.

Cruel! what hours haſt thou not wiſh'd away,

To urge this *trial* of a faith thou hadſt not?

Oh, that I could diveſt me of my *ſex*,

And, borrowing a deluſive form like *thine*,

Fly to the wilds of Idumæa's hills,

And hide me among *rocks*, more ſoft than *man*.

Jonath. Peace to thy gentle breaſt! *Terror's* falſe forms

Diſturb that downy ſeat of love and joy:

Teach my tormented thoughts to ſtart ſome *hope*,

Timely

Timely to ſave *thy* brother, and *my* friend;
Yet *ſhun* to diſobey my jealous father.

Jeſſid. Father, and friend, and brother! All are, now,
Shadows of *empty ſound* —— and vain *deceivers.*
Ah! why was our *obſcure*, *unbuſied*, life,
Thus painfully *exchang'd* for proud *diſtinction?*
Till the falſe glories of a *court* unbleſs'd us,
Hours after hours, years after years ſmil'd on,
And every hour, and every year was *happy!*
Quiet, and truth, and peace, and plenty, found us,
Converſe, and muſic, mirth, and thought, and freedom,
Lighten'd our leiſure, and made *time* ſeem *ſhorter.*
Life was, then, lovely, without eminence;
Now, in its eminence, 'tis all unlovely.

Jonath. Why doſt thou waſte thy cares, in fruitleſs grief,
When thou ſhou'dſt lend thy thoughts, to aid my meaning?

Jeſſid. Cold and ungrateful! Now thy ſummon'd ſoul
Should ruſh, to act the duties of a *friend*,
Thou, with a wily *ſtateſman's* feeble craft,
Find'ſt out new *ſalvo's* for reluctant will;
And, while my *David* DIES, form'ſt *ſchemes*, to SAVE him.
Lend me a guard, diſguiſe me into *man*,
If woman's *truth* conſiſts with that reſemblance,
I will, myſelf, go *warn* him —— one ſhort hour
Suffices, and I *ſave* him.

Jonath. Not, for the *world!*
Alas! thou know'ſt not, that, beneath yon mountain
Elon, the fierce Philiſtine, ſpreads his camp;
There, intercepting thy too ſlow advance,
He blaſts my hopes in life, and thy dear purpoſe.

The End of the Firſt Act.

Plan,

Plan, for the First Act of DARAXES.

AN

OPERA: of two Acts only.

ARPASIA, a beautiful ſhepherdeſs, is diſcover'd, *reading*, in the entrance of an arbour at the foot of a mountain, the ſcene, all round her, repreſenting vallies, and openings, between ridges of rocks; with proſpects of ſheep, at paſture; and ſhepherds, reclin'd, at a diſtance.

During a *ſong*, that expreſſes ſentiments, prefering the *ſerene* life, to the *buſy* — ſhe is approached, from one of the remoteſt openings, behind the hills, by Zamora, another noble ſhepherdeſs.

They meet, and ſalute, with tenderneſs, innocence, and mutual declaration of their happineſs: and, it appears, from their dialogue, that Zamora, (tho' not inſenſible of the charms of her *retir'd* life) has *wiſhes* for an *enlargement*, into the greater world; while Arpaſia, on the contrary, enjoys the *whole* of her deſire, in poſſeſſion of her *preſent happineſs*.

Hydarnes, father of Zamora, in the venerable habit of one of the Perſian *Magi*, enters to them, thro' the arbour; and, having overheard the diſpute, declares in favour of Arpaſia; and warns Zamora of the dangers of the *buſier* world; repreſenting, in *contraſte*, the calmneſs and delights of their *retreat*, in a lovely and fruitful tract, on the river Indus, unknown to, and cut off from, the reſt of Perſia, by inacceſſible ranges of *mountains*, where he governs, independently, a peaceful, and happy, number of

of families, whom, from *ignorance* and *rudeneſs*, he had ſoften'd into *knowledge* and *politeneſs*.

In the midſt of this conference, they are interrupted by the ſound of a trumpet; at which they expreſs amazement: the peace, and ſilence of their happy region having never been invaded by ſo *warlike* an alarm.——On a ſudden, down from the hills, and from the windings behind them, ruſh in a number of ſhepherds; under impreſſions of terror, to behold, deſcending from the top of a rock, on one ſide the ſtage, Daraxes, an Indian General, *plum'd*, in a warlike, and heroic habit.

The ſhepherds interpoſe between the ſtranger and Hydarnes; but, Daraxes, ſurprized at appearance of the *Ladies*, firſt addreſſes himſelf to *them* with a modeſt gallantry; and, then, approaching Hydarnes, with a reſigned and humble geſture, implores his *pity*, and the *protection*, due, to *unfortunate virtue*.

Hydarnes, mentioning the *trumpet*, is anſwered, by Daraxes, that he brought it not with him, but is flying from its menaces — that he is Lord of a province on the other ſide of the Indus; and, having received great wrongs, from Perſia, had gather'd a number of his friends, and invaded the kingdom, for revenge of his *injuries*—that he had been victorious in *two* pitch'd battles; but, unfortunately overpowered, by ſuperior numbers, in a *third*, was ſeeking ſhelter, among thoſe *deſart mountains*; and now cloſely purſued, after loſs of all his followers, by Hyſtaſpes, the Perſian Monarch, at the head of his *light-arm'd*; therefore, begs the furtherance of Hydarnes, for his *eſcape*, if it is poſſible;——if not, at leaſt for his *concealment*, againſt a day of *happier* fortune.

Hydarnes bids him be of comfort — ſince he was, *himſelf*, of Indian blood, and cou'd protect him, in the inmoſt parts of his region, by advantage of a neighbouring *paſs*, which he points to, againſt the utmoſt force of Perſia.——He then ſends out a party of ſhepherds up the hills on the left, to obſerve, and bring him word, how near, and how numerous the purſuers;——and, leaving a ſe-

a ſecond party, to attend Daraxes, and the *Ladies*, p miſes to return, after having given orders for *arming* people, and the neceſſary defence of the *paſs*. He t goes out, up the hills, on the right, attended by a th diviſion of ſhepherds.

Daraxes, with the Ladies, miſtaking them for ſiſt Zamora tells him they are *friends*, if poſſible, nearer t *ſiſters:* and expreſſing *apprehenſion*, preſſes Arpaſia, *retire*; who, appearing now more *ſpirited*, and affirmi that ſhe fears no danger, Zamora ſmiles, to perce how willingly ſhe wou'd forgive her being left *alone*, w the agreeable ſtranger; and goes out, up the hill, af her father.

Then comes on an amorous, and gallant ſcene, b tween Daraxes and Arpaſia: which cloſes the firſt Act the *Opera*.

PLAN, *for the Second* ACT.

TO the ſound of *trumpets*, and *drums*, Hyſtaſpe and his ſoldiers, appear, among the hills, d ſcending into the valley, on the left ſide:—And, on th oppoſite ſide, to ſound of *flutes*, and ſoft inſtruments, in terchangeably heard from each quarter, deſcends Hy darnes, ſurrounded by a venerable number of *Magi*, wit the *holy fire*; followed by Daraxes, between Arpaſia an Zamora; and, ſupported by armed *ſhepherds*, with bow and quivers; great numbers of *ſpears* appearing, *above* as it were, among, and behind, the hills.——The Per ſian *ſoldiers* range themſelves, as faſt as they deſcend, on *one* ſide the ſtage; and the *armed ſhepherds* do the like, on the *other*.

After a ſolemn pauſe, and ſlow advance, to give time for the *contraſte* in the *muſic*, Hyſtaſpes commands his followers to *reverence* the *holy fire*, and commit no out rage againſt, or in preſence of the *Magi*.——He then ap proaches

proaches Hydarnes, and demands ſternly *who* and *whence* he is; and of *what branch* of the *Magi*. ——Hydarnes anſwers, that he was, not originally, but, *adoptedly*, of the *Magi*,---once, a *ſlave*, to the uncle of that Lady, pointing to Arpaſia; who was a branch of their *Royal*, and moſt illuſtrious, *ſtem*.---But, that, as to himſelf, having by his ſkill, in *muſic*, *arms*, and *arts*, poliſh'd, and improv'd, the manners of the rural inhabitants of that ſavage tract, he had grown ſo far into the eſteem of their true and original *Lord*, that he had bequeathed to him his *power*, and adopted him his *ſucceſſor*. ---That he has, ſince then, ſo far *improv'd* the happineſs of his *impenetrable* region, that it has, now, neither the *want*, the *fear*, nor *deſire*, of the wealth, or the ſtrength of Perſia.

The King then reproaches Hydarnes with the abuſe of his *religious indemnity*, by protection of an *enemy in arms*; an invader of Perſia: and, upon rejection of his demand that Daraxes ſhould be *given up*, grows furious, with reſentment, and is advancing to *attack* the ſhepherds; who, on *their* ſide, *advance alſo*; but, the Ladies coming forward, and aſſerting the *rights* of their *ſanctuary*, the King ſeems ſtruck with the beauty of Zamora, and agrees, at her deſire, to refer the juſtice of his claim to the deciſion of *herſelf*, and Hydarnes.---And, upon *her* propoſition, Daraxes, too, on *his* part, conſents to ſubmit himſelf, without complaint, to *her* judgment.

Hydarnes deſires the King to explain the *foundation* of his anger; gently reproaching too eager a thirſt of *revenge*.---The King informs him, that this Daraxes, the Indian, had, unprovok'd, invaded his dominion, deſtroy'd his towns, and his people, and being, now, after two ſucceſsful battles, deliver'd into his hands, by favour of the *Gods*, upon loſs of a *third*, it would be impious in the *Magi* to withſtand the pleaſure of *Heaven*. He therefore inſiſts, that they give up Daraxes as a public enemy to Perſia---a *fugitive*, forſaken by *Gods*, and *men*, and *deſerving* the puniſhments, which were prepared for his violence.

Daraxes,

Daraxes, coming to plead, in his turn, *denies* that had, *unprovok'd*, invaded Perſia.---Aſſerting, on the co trary, that Darius, the father of Hyſtaſpes, had fall into India, with fire and ſword; at which time he, D raxes, had narrowly eſcap'd death, in his tendereſt i fancy, after having ſeen his *mother*, and *brothers*, barb rouſly *deſtroy'd*, in the flames of their city; and h father, and a little *ſiſter*, forc'd away into *captivity*;---th his hopes of a glorious *revenge* was his *warmeſt* motiv and the *juſteſt* for *ſupporting* a life, which had, ſo earl been imbitter'd with *miſery*;---that he had, to that en made *arms* his ſtudy, and that, however the Gods (fr ſome cauſes unknown) had *now* ſeem'd to frown on h purpoſe, they would reſtore him ſure means, hereafter-- for, they forſake not virtue, *for ever*.

Hydarnes, in the cloſe of what Daraxes had utter'd keeping his eye fix'd on his face, interrupts him, wit marks of *confuſion*, enquiring, firſt, his *own* name, the *that* of his *city*---next, with increaſing paſſion and amaze ment, his *mother*'s name---laſtly, that of his loſt *father* and his *ſiſter*; and, receiving anſwers to his expectation, throws himſelf, with extaſy, upon the neck of Daraxes; telling him, that HE is, *himſelf*, that *loſt father*——— and, giving Zamora into his arms, bids him *embrace hi captive ſiſter*.

After the *ſurprize*, natural to the occaſion, Hyſtaſpes, in reverence of a *virtue* ſo great, and ſo viſibly protected by the *Gods*; and, alſo, in atonement, for the *wrongs* which had been done, by his father, propoſes to make Zamora his *Queen*; which being conſented to, by Hydarnes, Daraxes then begs, that he may be bleſs'd with Arpaſia, and quit an unſteady world, for that happieſt of lives, which had, ſo long, been enjoy'd by his father, ---The *Opera*, here *cloſes*, with a dance of the Shepherds, ſix and ſix, for entertainment of the King, and in honour of the intended *nuptials*.

DARAXES,

A

PASTORAL OPERA.

ACT I. SCENE I.

*An arbour, at the foot of a mountain: the ſcene repreſenting vallies, and openings between ridges of rocks.——Sheep, at paſture, in proſpect; and ſhepherds, reclin'd at a diſtance——*Arpaſia, *reading, at the entrance of the arbour.*

Soft, diſtant, muſic, for ſome time, as of the ſhepherds pipes, from the mountains.

Arp. WHILE, around, in ſoft careſſes,
Nature bleſſes;
While ſhe the plains, with peace, and plenty, dreſſes:
Art informs a *reader's* mind,
To *taſte*, with pleaſure,
All this treaſure;
Feeling ev'ry joy, deſign'd.———
But, you, my harmleſs ſheep, in paſture, bleating!
Tho' far more *innocent*, than we;
Wanting *reaſon*, want *compleating*;
Nor your own enjoyments *ſee*.—
And, yet—perhaps, where *thought's* a ſtranger,
Pleaſure enjoys a *ſweeter* taſte!

Man,

Man,——who by *knowledge*, knows his *danger*:
Fearing the *future*, while he weighs the *paſt*;
Lets all his preſent bleſſings *ebb*, too faſt:
And *glide unheeded*, leſt they ſhould not *laſt*.

Enter, to her, Zamora, *like an* Amazon; *with a bow quiver, from a remote opening, behind the rocks.*

Zam. Arpaſia! dear lov'd ſiſter of my *ſoul!*
While *thou* ſitt'ſt, *read.ng*,
My ſteps, which ne'er could brook my *thought's* contrc
Gay, and unheeding,
Have trod the morning dews, in diſtant vales:
O'er hills, high-pacing,
The wild *deer* chaſing,
Light and unbounded, as the mountain *gales*.——
Why art thou *penſive?*——
Warm, and extenſive,
My mounting *ſoul*, from every pore *exhales*.——
If there's a world, *beyond* this rocky bound,
Why are we, here, *confin'd*, to dwell *unknown?*
Jewels, *conceal'd*, can bear no *price*, till found,
And, *what* are *conſcious* CHARMS, if never *ſhown*

Duet.

Arp. Thou, beautiful *wanton*, be wary.
Zam. And thou, my dear *wiſe-one*, take heed.
Arp. Who wiſh for too much will miſcarry.
Zam. But—*I* wiſh for no more than I *need*.
Arp. At home, we live *happy*, and *quiet*.
Zam. Abroad, we are *courted*, and *gay*.
Arp. There's ſurfeit, in richneſs of diet.
Zam. Ay—but *faſting* will wear us away.

Enter Hydarnes, *from the arbour*.

Zam. Peace, peace, Arpaſia:—ſee!—my *father's* here:—
Freedom's too bold, that *toys* when *wiſdom's* near.

Hyd.

Hyd. Zamora, I have heard ;—and ſmil'd :——
Believe Arpaſia—ſhe, tho' young, is wiſe——
Thou art, by *paſſion's* heedleſs *warmth*, beguil'd ;——
Light, and unſkill'd the *bliſs* of life to prize,
Thy tottering reaſon, like a *tripping* child,
Falls, at each *ſtraw*, that, in thy paſſage, lies.
Falſely, alas! thy wiſhes paint:
Miſcalling innocence *reſtraint*.
Ah! bar no mortal bliſs, beyond *redreſs!*
The happy *know not* happineſs.——
Safe, and unliable to *wrongs*, or *ſnares*,
No *pains* of *life* can overtake thee, *here!*
Why art thou *longing*, then, for abſent *cares?*
And wiſhing *torments* near?

Arp. Light, but not vain—as when the ſun-beams play,
And, o'er each object, dart the wav'ring ray ;
The bright deluſion *glows*, yet holds *no fire*,
So, flames Zamora's wiſh, without *deſire*.

AIR.

Zam. [*Laughingly.*] Never never *truſt*—a virgin's *tongue*,
'Twill ne'er her *heart* betray.
Ever while you live, fair *maids* among,
Heed what they *do* (if you pleaſe) you may,
But——give to the *winds* whate'er they *ſay*.

Arp. Her honeſt heart, unconſcious of deſigns,
Knowing no *ill*, no *cover* needs :
Gay, as her *eyes*, her artleſs *freedom* ſhines ;
Nor *feels* ſhe half the warmth for which ſhe *pleads*.

Zam. I'll ſing an idle *ſong*, I taught the ſwains,
To juſtify my gayety.

AIR.

Zam. The maid that ſtands *mute*, like a ſpy,
And *leers*, with a downcaſt eye,
Looks in, upon warm *deſire*:
They'll find it who venture to *try* her.

But, ſhe whoſe light *joke* at *random* flies,
Throws *outward* all her *fire*.
Arp. Ah!——yet——the happy *medium's* beſt:
For they who bleſs *others*, deſerve to *be bleſt*.
Zam. Give me a *miſtreſs* (if *ſuch* to be *had*)
Gravely glad;
Nor *mop'd*, nor *mad*:
Neither too *ſilly*, nor *wiſely imperious*;
Softly gay, and, *ſweetly*, ſerious.
Both.—Ah!——ſuch a happy *medium's* beſt!
Hyd. Peace to the *chearful heart*!——I like it well;
Where *wit* and *judgment*, both, *together* live:
But, when warm WISHES with gay *fancy* dwell,
Alarm'd *diſcernment* muſt not, *there*, forgive.
I tell thee, *levity* can never dream,
What *waiting* woes empale the buſy *great*.
The world's *proud idols* are not what they *ſeem*;
But, ſlaves, to empty *form*, and *tools* of *ſtate*.
Malice, revenge, fear, avarice, and ſmart,
Ride, in their pomp, and hover o'er their bed
Sleep has no *reſt*——their very *love* is ART!
Pain, in their hearts! and *tinſel* on their heads
One glowing luſtre of embroider'd *pride*
Miſ-colours *public life*, with vain *pretence*:
But, cannot, from experienc'd *reaſon*, hide,
How far *leſs bleſs*'d, than humble *innocence*.
Here, in this lovely tract, which *nature*, round,
With peace, and ſafety, *wall'd*—remote from *pow'*
In plains, by *bars* of rocky mountains, bound,
Sweetly content, enjoy the *ſmiling* hour.
Arp. Elſe, were our wiſdom, great Hydarnes! leſs,
Than theirs, your humbleſt *ſwains*, whoſe *min*
new *dreſs*,
Poliſh'd from rudeneſs, does their teacher *bleſs*,
While, in their native wilderneſs,
A ſpring, of *arts*, and *arms*, the ſhepherds feel;
And each new *day* does ſome new *bliſs* reveal.
Zam. One wiſh, *ſtill wanting*, to my *aid* I call;
Till others *know* me bleſs'd, ſcarce bleſs'd, at all.

Hi

Hid from *mankind*, our joys in *darkneſs* lie,
My father's *virtues*, like our God, the *ſun*,
O'er an enlighten'd *world* were form'd to fly,
Not a ſhort courſe, 'twixt deſart *mountains*, run.
Hyd. How vain alas! our erring *wiſhes* are!
Treading on *peace*, we reach at *care!*
Shew me the man, who knows not where to ſee
One, *more belov'd*, and *leſs oblig'd*, than he;
Who feels no *pain*, ſuſpects no *foe*,
On his *own land* whoſe riches grow;
Whoſe thoughts, are, like his actions, *free*,
Who neither envies, frets, nor fears:
Whom *learning* ſoftens, *honour* ſteers:
Whom *love* attends, and *truth* endears:
Immortal Powers!——how *mad* this man muſt be,
Cou'd he, in *courts*, expect to ſee,
A *Lord*, ſo NOBLY GREAT, as *he!*
[*Sound of a trumpet, at diſtance.*
[*They ſtart,*——*and appear ſurpriz'd.*
Zam. [*Joyfully.*] Ah!—what inſpiring *call* invites my ear!
Arp. [*Terrified.*] Grant, Heaven! no unexpected *danger* near!
Hyd. The brave, and the prepar'd, admit no fear.
Yet, till this moment, breath'd no *trumpet*, HERE,
To break ſoft *quiet*, in theſe happy ſhades,
By notes, *alarming*, *warlike*, and *ſevere!* [*Trumpet again.*
Hark! it each cavern of our hills invades.

Enter from the openings, between the rocks, on the right, a great number of ſhepherds, in different parties, with ſigns of ſurprize, and apprehenſion.

Hyd. *See!*—down the winding of yon hill, deſcends
A warrior, *plum'd*, and *arm'd!* of princely *air!*
He comes, in *haſte*, *alone*——and this way bends.

Enter from a rock, on the left, Daraxes ——*The ſhepherds interpoſe between the ſtranger and* Hydarnes.

Zam. *Stand*——or, *advancing*, to thy *ruin*, dare.
[*Advancing, with her bow; and an arrow preſented.*

Hyd. Brave! and, beyond her ſex, *aſpiring* ſtil
Hold, my Zamora——ſhepherds, give me
Dar. [*To* Zamora.] *Goddeſs of arms!* whoſe EYE
power to *kill!*
My *ſpear*, defenceleſs, at your feet I lay:
Unhappy, as its dying bearer's *fate*,
If it alarm'd your will, to *bar* my way!
[Dar. *laying down his ſwo*

AIR.

Take, O take, my uſeleſs arms,
All *defence* I now forſwear.
Proof, againſt ſuch pointed charms,
None the God of war cou'd wear!
If, in fight, to be a *loſer*,
Brings the vanquiſh'd ſmiles like *theſe*,
Fame, henceforth, will tempt no chuſer,
Love will teach *diſgrace* to *pleaſe*.

Hyd. Whence, ſtranger, has your *trumpet* paſſage
To fright the ſilent Genius of our groves
Dar. Purſu'd, alas! I *fly* the hoſtile *ſound*;
That, not my *fear*, but *apprehenſion*, move
Lord of a province, never Perſia's claim,
(Our rapid Indus rolls his waves *between*:)
For wiſh'd *revenge of wrongs*, in arms, I came
Mov'd by no pride of *pow'r*, or hateful *ſpl*
Two *happy* battles gave my ſword *ſucceſs*;
A *third* involv'd my fortune in *diſtreſs*.
My followers *loſt*, I fled a light-arm'd throng
Of Perſians, whom their Monarch *wings* alon
Hyſtaſpes! (not more brave) more *bleſs'd*, th
Now, triumphs——and, 'tis mine, to *'ſcape*, or
Hid, in theſe hills' impervious ſhades, my *life*
Imploring pity, *you* have pow'r to *ſave*.

Zam. Hope—for my father is no friend to *ſtrife*
But loves the *wretched*, and protects the *bra*
Arp. Hydarnes cannot wrong the *faith* you brin
More than Hyſtaſpes HERE—tho' *not* a *Kin*
Hyd. If the revenge which thou haſt loſt, was
The *Gods* can give it *back*—Be bold, and *truſt*.

Led, by ſome hand *divine*, thou found'ſt the way;
Where never wand'ring foot, *before*, cou'd *ſtray*.
Myſelf, of Indian blood, be *ſafe*, with *me*:
Behind theſe * hills, a region I command,
Guarded, by *paſſes*, from invaſion *free*,
And *proof*, againſt *whole* Perſia's warlike hand.
Some † to thoſe hills, down which the ſtranger came,
Climb; and inform me, when the danger's *near*.
Stay, YOU §,——Arpaſia, and my *daughter*, claim
Your preſence—Stay, and wait their orders, *here*.
Expect me ſwiftly back——I go but hence
To *arm*, and animate our due defence ‖.

AIR.

Dar. Aid me, reaſon! aid me, art!
In *war*, purſued, in *love* purſuing?
What a *folly* guides my heart!
Can *deſire* ariſe from *ruin?*
Can *I* feel a *lover's* ſmart?
Teach, lovely *ſiſters!* teach my willing tongue,
By *what* ſweet NAME your virtues ſhou'd be ſung?
Zam. Siſters, by CHOICE we *are*, but not by NAME:
FRIENDSHIP, that *nobler tye*,
Joins our two kindred ſouls, in *one* ſoft flame;
Lights up affection, both in *heart*, and *eye:*
And bids it *never die*.
Come, my Arpaſia, to the *paſs*—'tis *near:*
Danger, perhaps, may *overtake* us, *here*.
Arp. Methinks, we have not *yet*, ſuch cauſe for *fear*,
Danger, ſo *diſtant*, and our friends ſo *nigh*.

AIR.

Zam. When a maid, who was *fearful*, *alone*,
Grows *bold*, if her *hero* is *by*;

* Pointing to the right.

† To a party of ſhepherds who go out, up the hills on the left.

§ To a ſecond party of ſhepherds, who, remain, as guards, to the Ladies.

‖ Goes out, attended by a third party of ſhepherds, up the hills on the right.

Other maids are *politely shown*,
That she wants not *their company*:
Good *b'wye*, my dear sister, good *b'wye*,
You want not *my company*,
[*Exit* Zamora, *laugh*

Arp. Stranger—permit me to conduct you, *on*:
Zamora's livelier steps have led the way.
Dar. I grieve the Lady's *haste*, untimely *gone*:
But cou'd, *myself*, methinks, *for ever*—*stay*.
Arp. Why wou'd you stay?—The *foe* may soon, desce
Dar. All *foes* are *lost*, in so divine a *friend*.
Wou'd I had never *seen* you! for, (*before*)
I *hop'd*—but, *now*,—can ne'er be *happy* more.
Arp. Whence this unjust *despair*?
Dar. From *love*, and *you*:———
A *stranger*, whom unhappy stars pursue,
Dares not *aspire*———
Arp. The *brave* for ever, DARE;
Virtue shou'd *suffer* all things——but *despair*.
Unhappy merit claims deserv'd *redress*.
Dar. The woes YOU *pity*, cease to be *distress*.
Un-envy'd, let Hystaspes, now, *pursue*:
'Tis *more* than conquest, to be *sav'd* by YOU.

Duet.

Dar. Wou'd my gentle charmer *hear* me,
I cou'd *talk* my *life* away:
Arp. Did my modest heart but clear me,
I wou'd ask——*What is't you'd say!*
Dar. Think, how *sweetly form'd* you are.
Arp. That's a thought, *below* my care.
Dar. Think, I *adore*———
Arp. I'll *hear* no *more*———
Dar. One moment stay———
Arp. I *must* away——
Dar. I have a thousand things to say.
Arp. Come, and, *within*, repeat 'em o'er. [*Exeu*

End of the first ACT.

MEROPE:

A

TRAGEDY.

Acted at the

THEATRE-ROYAL

IN

DRURY-LANE.

DEDICATION.

COver'd, in Fortune's *ſhade*, I reſt reclin'd;
My griefs, all, ſilent: and my joys reſign'd:
With patient eye, life's *evening gleam*, ſurvey:
Nor *ſhake* th' out-haſt'ning ſands; nor bid 'em *ſtay*.
Yet, while *from life*, my ſetting proſpects fly,
Fain wou'd my *mind's* weak offſpring *ſhun to die*.
Fain wou'd *their* hope ſome *light through time*, explore;
The *name's* kind paſſport---when the *man's* no more.

Such, *let* 'em *find*!---yet, waſte no ſearch, *in vain*!
All undiſturb'd, let *buſy Dullneſs* reign!
Spare *Power's* deaf ear: from *Flatt'ry's* lure ſtart wide:
Not ſwell the tow'ry domes, of *air-built Pride*.
But, near ſome ſilent ſeat, where *Wiſdom* dwells,
Hail *Taſte* and *Candor*, in their penſive cells.
There ſits, high-ſhown, o'er *fogs* that *low're between*,
Wit's guardian LORD, in his ſequeſter'd ſcene.
There, the *gain'd ſoul's* MONOPOLIZER, find:———
Th' immenſe embracer, of *contain'd mankind*!
Him, whom no verſe o'erpaints, no thoughts o'er-rate:
By the *heart's* RANK, and *nature's charter*, GREAT!
Him, whom no *titles*, *loſt*, cou'd leave *leſs rais'd*:
Nor thrones imperial cou'd have held, *more prais'd*.
Whom each known right, by each beſt claim acquir'd,
With every charm, for every heart, inſpir'd.
THERE, *hail th' immortal beam* —— and *end* the care.
Feel every force, from every VIRTUE, *there*.
Find every GRACE, that ſmiles 'twixt pole and pole:
And *all* the MUSES, *met*—— in St. JOHN's SOUL.

April, 1749.

A. HILL.

ADVERTISEMENT to the READER.

IF there can be a *pride*, that ranks with *virtue*, it is T we feel from friendſhips with the *worthy*.—Mr. MALLE therefore, muſt forgive me, that I boaſt the honour, he done my *Merope*.—I have ſo long been a retreater from world, that one of the *beſt ſpirits* in it told me, lately, I made myſelf an ALIEN, there. I muſt confeſs, I owe ſo m obligations to its ornaments, of moſt diſtinguiſhed genius, t I muſt have looked upon it as a great *unhappineſs*, to have m choice of *ſolitude*, could I have judged ſociety, in general, h reſpect *ſo due* to *theſe adorners* of it.

Had I been *born* the ALIEN my friend *called* me, the reg wherewith our generous nation has received this Tragedy, mi look but as a natural effect of its *humanity* to FOREIGNERS.

Among theſe, the *French* above all people in the world, perience our, too kind, partiality—in favour even of their *def* and *levities*. And, yet, their boaſted *politeſſe* wants gratitude pay us back a *like civility*, where due to our *beſt* qualities.

For, *France*, unſatisfied with her ambition toward monop in *empire*, would extend it to ſupremacy in *wit* and *learni* And, particularly, ſome of Mr. *Voltaire's* pieces are ſo ſwel with this preſumptuous puffineſs, that I am forc'd into *aba ments*, of the diſpoſition I once felt, to look upon him as a ger rous thinker. So much over-active *ſenſibility*, to his own cou try's claims, with ſo unfeeling a *ſtupidity*, in judging the prete ſions of his neighbours, might *abſolve* all indignation, ſhort groſs indecency; toward one who has not ſcrupled (in the prefa to *his* MEROPE) to repreſent the *Engliſh* as *incapable of Trage* nay, even of *painting*, or of *muſic*. We are men, he ſays, w puſh to their extremes, upon our Theatres, *barbarity*, *abſurd* and *abſolute indecency*.—Men, born in a too barren climate, produce a *taſte* for the *fine arts*; and who muſt *rank beneath* other people, in the points of *genius* and of *literature!*

To ſuch *provoking* ſtimulations, I have ow'd the inducement, *retouch*, for Mr. *Voltaire's* uſe, the characters in his high-boaſt *Merope:* and I have done it on a plan as near his own, a could *wring it*, with ſafe conſcience: that is to ſay, witho diſtaſte to *Engliſh* audiences. For he muſt pardon me, if I a ſenſible, that our *unpoliſhed London Stage*, (as he aſſumes t liberty of calling it) has entertained a *nobler* taſte of di nify'd *ſimplicity*, than to deprive dramatic poetry of all th

anima

animates its paſſions; in purſuit of a *cold, ſtarv'd, tame, abſtinence*; which, from an affectation to ſhun *figure*, ſinks to *flatneſs*: an *elaborate eſcape* from *energy*, into a groveling, wearisome, bald, barren, un-alarming, *chilneſs* of expreſſion, that *emaſculates* the mind, inſtead of *moving* it.

I would not have it charged upon his being a *Frenchman*, that I uſe a kind of *hoſtile* ſtyle, in ſpeaking of this gentleman. He has been pleaſed to do me, in ſome prefaces of his, a great deal of particular honour,---and it has been more than once, and upon different occaſions, I have given *him* proofs, of a *partiality*, that will exempt me from ſo poor a cenſure.—Our *inſulaires* (as he contemptuouſly calls us) are not us'd to think ſo *narrowly*, as to extend the temporary animoſity of nations *oppoſitely intereſted*, to the ſpirits of their *writers* upon *literary* ſubjects.———Arts and ſciences are of *no country*. They conjoin the natives of all corners of the earth, as fellow-citizens of *one republic*.---But, what *imports* this truth, toward privileging ſuch an arrogance, as ſelf-incorporates *itſelf*, by unbenevolent and *ſeparatory* partialities.

I have room to ſay no more, in a ſhort preface; but will undertake, in a more proper place, to make it evident, to Mr. *Voltaire's* ſatisfaction, and to that of the *French author* of a piece which they have lately publiſhed, in a like vain preference of *their Players* too, as well as *Poets*, (call'd LE COMEDIEN) that we have had much *finer writers*, now have; and ſhall, always, have 'em; and that we have *better Actors*, too, and *Actreſſes*, than thoſe of *Paris*. I ſhall ſhortly hope to leave this matter indiſputable even to a *French* judge: in a *compariſon between the* ENGLISH *and* FRENCH *Theatres*.——It would have pleaſed me more, if *abler* hands than mine had ſeem'd diſpoſed, to do their country *fuller juſtice*. There are many, in it, ſo much better qualify'd, *for* doing it, that I impute its not being done, already, to no other motive, than *contempt*, of thoſe vain writers confidence.

The univerſally acknowledged, and *felt*, ſkill, of a *Eumenes* and a *Merope*, ſuch as no Stage ever ſaw excell'd, (not to name *others*, who deſerv'd applauſe, and met with it, to a degree excitingly uncommon) leaves it quite unneceſſary to add any thing upon that ſubject, *here:* there ſeeming to have been a generous ſtruggle, whether the Town's ready diſpoſition to encourage excellence in acting, or the *Actors* to reward that diſpoſition, by increaſe of power in pleaſing, ſhould be moſt agreeably remarkable.

PRO-

PROLOGUE

Spoken by Mr. GARRICK.

TOUCH'D be your generous hearts, to ſpare this Play
Where mirth *wou'd laugh* humanity *away.*
Two thouſand y'ars our tale has ſhook the ſtage,
And mov'd the hearts of Greece, *from age to age:*
Ev'n ALEXANDER *wept our Queen's deſpair,*
And the world's conqueror, ſat conquer'd, *there.*
What reach of taſte could Attic *pride preſume,*
What flame of courage e'er diſtinguiſh'd Rome,
But Britain's *ſons may boaſt an equal merit,*
Wou'd Britains *think and act with* Britiſh *ſpirit!*

Ye fluttering triflers of an hour too ſhort,
Ye foes to thinking, and ye friends of ſport,
Forbear to laugh, when penſively diſtreſs'd;
Sighs in yon circle, ſwell the beauteous breaſt.
Charms to the faireſt face, ſoft ſorrow lends;
Pity and innocence are boſom friends!
And when deep anguiſh ſhakes a feeling mind,
How muſt it ake when witlings ſneer behind?

Nor dream, ye gay, that only mirth ſhou'd pleaſe,
No ſprightly wit e'er laugh'd off life's diſeaſe.
Experience tells us, ſoon or late comes care,
And he who flies from thought will meet deſpair.

Ladies, be firm to paſſion's tendereſt claim,
Sighs are love's breezes, and will fan the flame.
Laughing gallants may promiſe merry lives,
But laughing huſbands make you weeping wives.
They whoſe own hearts can feel will treat yours beſt;
And he give pain, that thinks it but a jeſt.
Nobly weep out, nor let an ill-tim'd bluſh,
Keep back the ſtruggling tear that longs to guſh.
All that are wiſe and brave, by nature know,
'Tis virtue's mark to weep at others' woe.

EP

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Mrs. PRITCHARD.

I'M glad with all my heart, I've ſcap'd *my wedding*—
Glad! *cry the maids?*——*Heaven keep ſuch joy from*
ſpreading!
Marriage, (poor things!) don't move their *heart ſo* coldly.
'Tis a dark leap, *they own---but, love* jumps boldly.—
Fair fall th' advent'rers! I'm no huſband-hater.—
Only, be warn'd by me, *and* wed no TRAITOR.
Pain-hunting murm'rer! *born, to* growl, *and* grumble!
No King *can pleaſe him,---and no* Wife *can* humble!
Sick to the ſoul, *be* HEAVEN *his kind Phyſician!*
Earth's *ableſt drugs are* loſt, *upon* ambition.
All Warwick-lane *falls ſhort: and, to my knowledge,*
No cure is hop'd for, in our female college.
Shun plotting heads, *dear Ladies!---All* miſcarries,
When one, who hums *and* haws *at* midnight, MARRIES.
Better, plain, downright, DUNCE---*no* dream, *purſuing:*
One, that means bluntly---and knows, *what he's doing!*
Not *him, whoſe factious mind,* outſoaring *pleaſure,*
Is ſtill moſt buſy, *when his* wife's *at* leiſure.
Better, a ſportſman, *ſound of wind, and hearty.*——
Better, Sir Sot,---*than ſpouſe* dry *drunk, with party!*
A hunting *huſband* hallows---*and you* HEAR *him.*——
A drunken *deary* ſtag-gers---*and you* STEER *him.*——
Each---conſcious *of his* Wife, *takes care, to make her,*
One way or other---an indulg'd partaker.
But, your ſage, ſaturnine, ambitious *lover,*
Keeps *no* one ſecret, *woman* wou'd diſcover.
Stranger at home, he ſtrolls abroad, *for bleſſing:*
And holds whate'er *he* HAS *not* worth *poſſeſſing.*
Freedom, and mirth, and health, and joy,---deſpiſes!
And ſcorns all REST---*he, ſo pro-found-ly* WISE *is!*
At length, thank Heaven! he DIES: *kind* vapours *ſtrike him:*
And leaves behind,---*ten thouſand madmen,* like *him.*

Perſons

Perſons Repreſented.

POLIPHONTES, General of *Mycene*,	Mr. HAVARD.
MEROPE, Widow of the late King,	Mrs. PRITCHAR
EUMENES, her Son,	Mr. GARRICK.
EURICLES, a Lord of MEROPE's Party,	Mr. USHER.
NARBAS, Foſter-father to EUMENES,	Mr. BERRY.
EROX, Favourite of POLIPHONTES,	Mr. BRIDGES.
ISMENE, Daughter of NARBAS,	Mrs. GREEN.

Chief Prieſt, and other Prieſts, Mr. BEARD, *&c.*

Ladies, Officers, Guards, &c.

MEROPE:

ACT I. SCENE I.

An Apartment in the Palace.

Merope, *mournful on a Couch.*

Iſmene, *leaning melancholy, below; and attendants.*

Iſm. SEE! where the lone majeſtic mourner weeps;
Loſt, even to *muſic*'s power!—try: ſtrain each note,
In melody's wide compaſs.—Happily,
Some change, through *ſad* to *lively*, may have force,
To ſtrike recov'ring ſenſe, and wake regard.
—Firſt, in low ſympathy of *ſorrow's ſoftneſs*,
Sooth her dejected ſoul—then, ſtart at once
To *ſwells* of *joy*—and ſtorm attention's ear.
[*Muſic with trumpets.*

After the muſic, Merope *riſes and comes forward.*

Mer. Let me, when, *next*, thy too officious love,
Faithful Iſmene, trys th' harmonious charm,
Let me, have muſic, *ſolemn*, all, and *ſlow*,
Sad-ſuited to my thoughts.——Mix not for me,
Who have no power to *taſte*, ſuch *ſpritely* notes,
As they who are more happy, find more ſweet?

Iſm. Why, when the *Gods* grow gentle, are *you* ſad?
You felt their *anger*, ſharply.—Now they ſmile,

Em-

Embrace their proffer'd bounty.—All the Lords
Of glad Mycene, in full ſenate met,
Take meaſures to proclaim you *reigning* Queen:
You, whom diſtreſs but brightens!—to whoſe charm
Made aweful by your grief, woes add new majeſty!
Mer. What, no news yet, of Narbas? or my *ſon*
Iſm. May it be ſoon!—No Prince, of birth like h
Where-e'er conceal'd, can 'ſcape ſuch ſearch, unknow
Mer. Will ye, at length, ye Powers, reward my te
Will ye, at laſt, reſtore Eumenes, to me?
——If he yet lives——this only remnant heir
Of his wrong'd mother's miſeries!——oh, *ſave* him.
From his dear breaſt, ſtrike wide the murd'rer's dagg
Is he not *yours?* a branch from great Alcides?
What, tho'—(forget it, and be *huſh'd*, O faith!)
What, tho' to traitors' proſp'rous ſwords, you gave
His *father*'s fated life—ah, yet! deſert not
This image of his form, that fills my ſoul.
Iſm. Dear, tho' he doubtleſs was, and juſtly mour
Shou'd you *exclude* all ſenſe of bliſs, beſide?
Mer. I am a *mother*:——with a mother's *fears*.
Iſm. But, can a mother's fears efface the ſtamp
Of *hero*'s ſoul, that marks a race like yours?
—Sweet, tho' his infant ſmiles, they dwell, too fix'd,
Too deep, on your touch'd memory!——Long years
Are paſt, ſince firſt you loſt him.
Mer. Loſt him?——*never*.——
In twice ſeven dreadful years, no moment's light
Broke on my eyes, but brought *his image* with it.
Why tell'ſt thou me of *time?*—Days, months, and yea
Have grown; but with 'em grew, my pain, to loſe hi
—Weigh that laſt fatal hint thy father ſent me.
Hope, ſoon, ſaid he, *to ſee the Prince Eumenes*,
All, you wou'd wiſh:—*fear* all, from Poliphontes.
Iſm. Wiſely, you fear him:——but 'twere wiſer, ſt
So fearing, to *prevent* him.———Hear the *States:*
Quit, at their prayer, this *Regent*'s name—be *crown'd:*
And riſe, *indeed* the *Queen* they meant to make you.

M

Mer. Is not the crown my *ſon's?*
Iſm. A ſon, ſo lov'd,———
Shou'd he return, wou'd thank———
Mer. Periſh the heart,
That, meanly proud, and poorly fill'd for *ſelf*,
Swells, from another's *loſſes!*
Iſm. Public intereſt———
Mer. Curſe on *all* int'reſt, that includes not *honeſty!*
—But, here, ev'n int'reſt brings no plea to tempt me!
What can a *childleſs* mother hope, from empire?
What has diſtreſs to do, with pomp's vain luſter?
—I ſee the very light of heav'n, with *pain.*
Never ſhall ſplendor chear theſe blaſted eyes,
That ſaw my bleeding Lord, my murder'd children;
Saw my friends fall: ſaw *Men* and *Gods* forſake me.
—O, guilt! O, perfidy!—oh! death's dire day!
Preſent for ever to my frighted ſoul.
Iſm. Oft have I wept,——to hear that day's ſad tale.
Mer. I hear it *now!*—Even yet their cries riſe round me!
Save, ſave, the *King!*——ſave the poor gaſping *Princes:*
Save the diſtracted *Queen!*———I ſcream——I fly—
On every ſide I turn, meet battling crowds:
Swords, glitt'ring ſpears, loud ſhouts, and mingled groanings.
Meet, *laſt*—a ſight—beyond all ſenſe of horror!
Meet———an expiring huſband's out-ſtretch'd eye,
Strain'd, with a death-mix'd tenderneſs on mine———
And ſtruggling from his blood, to reach and claſp me.
Iſm. Patience, O Madam, and forget theſe horrors.
Mer. ——There two expiring infant ſuff'rers *fell,*
The eldeſt of our loves!———duteous in *death!*
Croſs the King's breaſt, they threw their little bodies,
And lent *their* hands' weak aid—to ſave their father.
——— *Only* Eumenes ——— 'ſcap'd th' aſſaſſins' fury.
Some interpoſing *God* vouchſaf'd to *veil* him:
And he, who ſcreen'd him, then, may *once* reſtore him.
——— Narbas, thy wife, thy faithful father, bore him

Far from my ſight —— to ſome dark ſafe retreat:
Some *deſart*, —— barren of diſtreſs, and man!

SCENE II. Merope, Iſmene, Euricles

Iſm. Madam! —— Lord Euricles ——
Mer. Welcome----what hope?
Eur. Vain was our ſearch--from Peneus' bank it ſpr
O'er vaſt Olympus: far and wide, through Greece,
Enquiry, lab'ring, loſt its fruitleſs prayer.
Deſcription cou'd not wake the leaſt idea.
None knew, none ever heard of, Narbas' name!
Mer. Alas! he breathes no more —— my ſon is *d*
Iſm. So, fear makes real every fancied woe.
—— You've heard, that, on report of this new peac
My father guides him, ſecret, to your hopes.
Eur. Juſt was his caution! Narbas, wiſely loyal,
Veils his return, and cautiouſly conveys him.
Narbas knows all his dangers —— I, mean while,
Watch, with a guardful eye theſe murd'rers motions
And, with determin'd hand, prepare to ſave him.
Mer. On faith ſo try'd as thine, even woe leans eaſy
Eur. Doubt but my *power*'s defect: my *will* finds n
—— But I have news more threat'ning.
Th' aſſembled ſenate vote, in warm debate,
A conſort in your crown. ——
Mer. Preſumptuous care!
You ſhou'd have call'd it *inſult*.
Eur. Words were vain,
Truth, unſuſtain'd by power, but fights, to *fall*.
The partial *people* roar for Poliphontes:
And right, and law, and pity, ſink before him.
Mer. Can fortune, then, reduce the great to *pity!*
Can Kings, in their own realms, contract to *ſlaves?*
Eur. Something muſt be reſolv'd, to check their ſpe
Mer. Yes—I will *face* theſe Lords, of Kings and La
Comets of empire! theſe portentous ſtars,

T

That ſparkle by the fire they *ſteal* from majeſty!
I will go dart truth's light'ning in their eyes,
And thunder in their ears the rights of thrones.
I will revive loſt ſenſe of truſt and duty:
I will aſſert their Sov'reign's near return. [*Going.*
Eur. Oh, Heav'n! be wary ——that way, ruin lies.
Their tyrant leader ſtarts, already fir'd,
By that alarm: and dreams of what he dreads.
Mer. What *can* he more —— ſo much already done?
Eur. Jealous of danger, men make haſte in guilt:
Work, to be ſafe, and hold no means too wicked.
Mycene, but by faction, freed from faction,
Claim'd like a conqueſt, he computes his *own.*
No tye ſo ſacred binds endanger'd valour,
Where hot ambition ſpurs it. —— Every rampart
Gives way, before him. *Law*, corrupted, guards him.
Wealth dreſſes, *Poverty* attends, *Pride* leads:
And *Prieſthood* preſſes Gods who *hate* — to *ſerve* him.
Mer. I ſee th' abyſs, before me — Let it be.
If I plunge in, and cruſh this Poliphontes,
'Tis but, to fall for vengeance.
Eur. Soft!—he *comes.* [*Exeunt* Euricles *and* Iſmene.
Mer. Wear for a moment, heart! the veil thou hat'ſt.

SCENE III. Merope, Poliphontes.

Pol. Ever in *tears*, my Queen! — lend a long truce
To ſighs; and caſt aſide your needleſs ſorrow.
Shake, from thoſe injur'd eyes, each cloud that dims 'em:
And to the voice of *love*, vouchſafe your ear.
—— You frown ——
Mer. I do indeed: and gaze, with horror!
Pol. Gaze on.—I am no ſtranger to *myſelf:*
Nor to a woman's *paſſions.*—I grew grey
Beneath a weight, of winters ſpent in arms.
— I know, time's furrows are no paths to love.
I know it, all--but, wiſdom knows it *not.*
——Weigh not my offer in diſdain's light balance.

You are the daughter, mother, wife of *Kings:*
But the ſtate wants a *Maſter.*——What avails
Vain title, till ſome ſword, like mine, ſupports it.
Mer. Bold *ſubject*, of a King who call'd *me* wife!
Dar'ſt thou defame the mem'ry of thy *Lord*,
With ſuch audacious hope?——Aſpire to *me!*
Me, to ſupplant my *child!* my heart's whole care!
Stain his diſhonour'd throne, with guilt and thee!
Me, can'ſt thou dream ſo baſe, to wed thy lowneſs:
And crown with empire's wreath a ſoldier's brow?
Pol. Soldier? immortal Gods!—*Who* more deſerve
To *govern* ſtates, than he who, beſt, can *ſave?*
He who was, firſt, call'd *King*, ere that, was *ſoldier.*
Great, becauſe brave; and ſcepter'd by his *ſword.*
I am *above deſcent*; and prize no *blood.*
Scarce is my own left mine; 'tis loſt, for glory:
Spilt in my country's cauſe: in *yours*, fair ſcorner!
Take ſafety—'tis *my* gift. Fill half *my* throne;
My party calls *all* mine: love *ſhares* it yours.
Mer. Party? thou fell provoker, of reproach!
Party ſhould tremble, where a *Monarch* rules?
Pol. There will be parties; and there *muſt* be Kings
And he, who beſt can *curb*, was form'd to reign.
———I, who *reveng*'d your Lord, by right ſucceed hi
Mer. Succeed him, traitor?——Has he not a *ſon?*
Gods were his great forefathers—*thence*, his claim.
Pol. Far other value, bears Mycene's *crown.*
Right, to rule *men*, is now no longer held
By dull deſcent, like *land*'s low heritage:
'Tis the pluck'd fruit of toil——'tis the paid price
Of blood, loſt nobly: and 'tis, thence, *my* due.
Mer. What haſt thou done, thou wretch! to dare ſuch hop
Pol. Bethink you of that day, when theſe proud walls
Bluſh'd with the blood you boaſt, from traitors' ſwords
Review your helpleſs *huſband*—ſee your *ſons*
Expiring round you.—Wipe thoſe guſhing eyes—
And view me, what I *was*: not, then, too *low*
To ſhare your ruffled *paſſions.*—Yes: 'twas I,

Fro

From your freed palace chas'd th' o'erwhelming foe;
Sav'd your Herculean ſcepter, and its Queen.
——I, I, *repell'd* ——the woes you could but *weep*.
See, *there*, my right, my rank, my claim to *love*.
Mer. Hear, hear him, Heaven! and give me back my ſon.
Pol. Yes: let him come, this *ſon!*—He ſhall be taught
Leſſons of glory: taught *my* arts to reign.
——*Joy* to the blood of Hercules! —— I, too,
Revere: let others dread it. *My* ambition
Climbs *beyond* progeny.— To ſpring *from* Gods,
Is leſs, than mine —— who, *like* a God, *command*.
Mer. If thou would'ſt emulate a God, be *juſt*:
Man can be *brave*, too boldly.——Hercules
Sav'd many a King——But, did he *ſteal* their *diadems?*
——Would'ſt thou reſemble Hercules?— Protect
Unfriended innocence. Aſſert thy Prince.
Reſtore th' unhappy wanderer to my arms;
Ceaſe to afflict; and *give* him to my fondneſs.
—Thus, could thy influence move, *ſo* try'd, *ſo* courted,
Who knows——for gratitude has power, *like* love——
Who knows——how far I *might* forget my glory ——
And—if peace dwells with thee—*expect* it *not* ——
I will not bid thee hope —— that I *can ſtoop*
So low.—— *Bend*, I am ſure, I *cannot*. [*Exit* Merope.

SCENE IV. Poliphontes, Erox.

Erox. Entering, I heard her too preſumptuous ſcorn,
And wonder'd at your patience! Waits a King,
For a weak woman's *wiſh*, to fix his throne?
Greatly and bravely have you clear'd your way
To the hill's foot: yet, when it courts your climbing,
Fall back, to *ſigh*; and ſeek *her* hand, to lead you!
Pol. Near, as thou think'ſt I ſtand, my warier eye
Marks, 'twixt the throne and me, a *precipice*,
Where faith or I fall headlong. —— Does not Merope
Know, her Eumenes *near?* —— Shou'd he return,

Th' inconſtant people wou'd with ſhouts receive him,
And ſmooth his way to empire, o'er *my* boſom.
— Thou know'ſt, from proofs moſt timely intercep
This new boy King *returns*, and hopes Mycene.

Erox. Truſt your high fortune, and diſdain to do
Foreſight and *Fierceneſs* are the brave man's Gods,
And his own hand ſupports him.

Pol. My late order?

Erox. 'Twas, with a ſilent firmneſs, well obey'd.
— From Elis to Mycene, every road
Is watch'd, by ſleepleſs warders. — If they come,
Narbas and *he*, their *Gods* muſt march before 'em:
Or not Alcid's' blood could 'ſcape the ſhedding.
Your ſoldiers' zeal is warm.

Pol. But is it *blind?*

Erox. It *is*. None knows his *name*, whoſe life he w
All they have yet been told is, a ſad tale,
Of an *old wily traitor*, leading with him,
On murd'rous purpoſe, an *aſſaſſin youth*,
Urg'd by exacted oaths to ſeek *your* death.

Pol. But what this rumour, of Miſanthus *kill'd*,
Before Alcides' *temple?* ——— Is that true?

Erox Too ſure, he fell. — I choſe *his* truſty arm
Join'd with his nat'ral *brother's*, as moſt fit
To guard that likeſt ſtation; where, ſhould Narba
Dare, with his exile, touch Mycene's *border*,
Firſt, they wou'd reſt, to beg that *Godhead's* care,
From whom their race preſumes its proud deſcent.

Pol. 'Twas forecaſt, worthy of a zeal, like thine.
Nor cou'd thy care have choſe an abler hand,
Or one more try'd in blood, than that Miſanthus.
— 'Twas *he*, thou know'ſt, that, faithful to my ca
On that black night, attending, near Creſphontes,
Taught the King's ſword, amid the duſk of ſlaughte
To pierce his *Maſter's* breaſt. — An act, ſo daring,
Deſerv'd the ſword, tho' three rich *gems* adorn'd it.
He *had* it: and he *wore* it, for his pains.

Erox. Yet, at Alcides' *temple*, drew it raſhly,

And *loſt it*, with his *life*.
Pol. How *'ſcap'd* his brother?
Erox. Scar'd, out of mem'ry's uſe, all he cou'd tell me
Was, that the God inſpir'd ſome *dreadful form!*
Some more than mortal *monſter*; —— and *he fled*.
Pol. Vile ſafety! —— left his brother unreveng'd!
And ſhun'd a ſoldier's death! We muſt be watchful.
Some in-felt *bodings* bid me call this ſtranger
Eumenes: or his *friend*.
Erox. That fear was mine.
Till, on reflection that he came *alone*,
It look'd unlikely. ——— Chance it, as it may,
Whene'er he this way comes, he comes to *die*.
Pol. True.—Yet I cou'd have wiſh'd to *ſpare this* crime,
But, one firſt choſen, the reſt grow neceſſary:
So falls the ſon. ——— The *mother* muſt not follow.
Her, I have *need* of. Marriage mends my reign.
Her rightful title conſecrates ambition:
And uſurpation whitens into *law*.
—— The people love her: I, poſſeſſing *her*,
Hold her friends too, in *dowry* —— Erox! —— thou,
Whoſe fate grows cloſe to mine, aſſiſt my ſcheme.
Skill'd how to ſpread craft's net, allure the people.
Train 'em, by ev'ry art: poize ev'ry temper,
Avarice will *ſell* his *ſoul:* buy that, and *mould* it.
Weakneſs will be *deluded*; there, grow *eloquent*.
Is there a tott'ring faith? grapple it faſt
By *flatt'ry:* and profuſely deal *my favours*.
Threaten the guilty. *Entertain* the gay.
Frighten the rich. Find *wiſhes*, for the wanton:
And *reverence* for the godly. ——— Let none 'ſcape thee.
Dive into *hearts:* found every nature's *biaſs* ——
And bribe men by their *paſſions*. —— But, theſe arts,
Already thine, why waſte I time to *teach* thee!
Vainly, the *ſword* ſucceſsful ſcales a throne;
Since, Fortune *changing*, ſtrength's loſt hope is flown.
But *Art*, call'd in, attracts reluctant *will:*
And, what were loſt by power, is gain'd by ſkill.

ACT II. SCENE I.

The Palace.

Merope, Euricles, Iſmene.

Mer. IS the world dumb on my Eumenes' fate?
Iſm. Calamity, too ſoon, had found a tongu
Mer. Has nothing from the borders yet been heard
Eur. Nothing, that claims *your* notice.
Mer. Who is *he*,
This priſoner, I am told, but now brought guarded?
Eur. A raſh young ſtranger, caught with guilty hai
Red, from the recent marks of ſome new murder.
Mer. A *murder!* an *unknown!* WHOM has he kill'd
How? and *where* was it? —— I am fill'd with horror.
Iſm. Oh! ſenſe too lively of maternal love!
All things alarm your tenderneſs. You hear
Chance ſpeak: and take her voice for that of Nature.
Mer. What is his *name?* whence *came* he?--why *unknow*
Eur. He ſeems, and is, if truth may truſt appearance
A youth, of that ſoft ſtamp, which Fortune leaves
To Nature's gentleſt care; ſome nymph's Adonis,
Whoſe eye might ſooner be ſuppos'd to kill
Th' unpity'd maid, than his gay ſword the man.
Mer. Whom (*tell* me) has he *kill'd?*--anſwer.--I'll ſee hi
Eur. What ſtrange emotion, this? ———
Mer. No matter ——— bring him.
If I diſcover guilt, 'tis mine to *puniſh:*
If wrong'd, I owe him *mercy:*
Eur. Should he have merit,
'Tis plac'd ſo low by Fortune ——
Mer. Fortune's faults,
Where merit ſuffers, calls on Kings to *mend* 'em.
Eur. What can a wretch like this *deſerve*, from powe
Me

Mer. O, Euricles, look *inward;* aſk thy heart.
Be, for a moment, but, this wretch, *thyſelf*----
And, *then*, acquit the Power, that ſcorn'd to note thee.
---Beſides, who knows? he may---be *ſtill*, prompt fear,
Perhaps, my troubled mind ſtarts hints too lightly.
Hearts that have every thing to fear, ſlight nothing.
--Let him be brought---I will, myſelf, examine him.
Eur. Your will *muſt* be obey'd.
Mer. Go, my Iſmene!
Bid thoſe who guard the pris'ner bring him hither.
[*Exit* Iſmene.
[Euricles *offering to go.*
Mer. Stay, Euricles.
Stay: and partake more terrors.--Cou'd you think it?
Preſs'd by new ſorrows, I forget my paſt,
And have not yet inform'd you---Polyphontes
Has dar'd demand my *hand:* dar'd---talk of *marriage*,
Eur. Oh! Queen!
I know his offer *inſult:* know, it ſtains
Your name. Yet, bluſhing, *add*,--your forc'd conſent,
Grown infamouſly *neceſſary*,---ſtands,
The ſole, ſafe bar, 'twixt all your race and *ruin.*
Mer. 'Tis horror, but to *think*, ſo vile a dream!
Eur. So thinks the *army.*---So the *ſenate* thinks.
So think th' exacting *Gods:*---and ſo---
Mer. The *Gods!*---
Why were *they* nam'd?---Cou'd they forgive ſuch *fall?*
From their own offſpring, to a ſon of clay!
Eur. The King, your ſon---
Mer. Ah! name not *him.*---How, Euricles!
How wou'd he thank my choice of *ſuch* a father?
Eur. Princes grow wiſe by ſorrows. He will ſee
That hated choice the root of all his ſafety.
Mer. What, what, have you been telling me?
Eur. Hard truths:
Due from firm loyalty to deep diſtreſs.
Mer. Can Euricles then plead for Poliphontes!
Eur. I know him guilty;---but, I know him *raſh:*

Know

Know him *reſiſtleſs*: know him *childleſs*, too:
And know, you love Eumenes.
Mer. Loving *him*,
How can I chuſe but *hate*, the hand that wrongs hi
Princes ſhou'd be *above* theſe ſelf-ſecurings:
And born, to live for truth — or die for glory.
[*Sits and weeps, regardleſs of* Eumenes' *ent*

SCENE II. Merope, Euricles, Iſmene, *guards* Eumenes, *in chains.*

Eum. — [*To Iſmene.*] Is that the *Queen*, ſo fam'
miſeries?
Iſm. It *is*.
Eum. How ſweetly aweful!—how *adorn'd*, by ſorr
Iſm. Why doſt thou pauſe? the Queen admits thee ne
Eum. No wonder, ſo much ſweetneſs, *ſo diſtreſs'd*,
Mov'd, even ſo greatly diſtant, — as to *me*:
And drew me, from my deſart! — Give me leave
To ſtand, a while---and gaze unmark'd---and *note* h
——— O, ye protecting *Gods!* whate'er becomes
Of an abandon'd, nameleſs thing, like *me*,
Bleſs this *ſupreme* unfortunate!
Iſm. Madam!--- the *priſoner* waits.
Mer. — [*Turning, to obſerve him.*] A *murderer*, this!
Come forward, ſtranger.
---A mien like this, a murd'rer's! —— *Can* it be,
That looks, ſo form'd for truth, ſo mark'd for innoc
Cover a cruel heart? —— Come *nearer*, youth!
Thou art unhappy; bid that fate *protect* thee:
And ſpeak, as to an ear that loves the wretched.
Anſwer me now.---Whoſe was the blood thou ſhed'ſ
Eum. Oh, Queen!--yet--for a moment--ſpare my ton
Mer. Murder, and *modeſty*!---Whence, all this ſha
Eum. Reſpect, confuſion,---ſomething, *here---unna*
And never felt, till *now*,——have bound my tongue
But—— oh! do juſtice, to your power to ſhake me
And, let not *heſitation* —— paſs —— for *guilt*.

Mer. Go on---Who was he, whom, I'm told, thou
ha'ſt kill'd ?

Eum. One, who with wrongs, and inſult, urg'd my
Young blood takes fire too aptly. [raſhneſs.

Mer. Young ! — was he young ?
ce, at my conſcious heart, were *warm* ——compar'd
With what he chills my ſoul with!--Did'ſt thou *know* him?

Eum. I did *not.* All Mycene's earth, and air,
Her cities, and her ſons, are new, to *me.*

Mer. What, was he *arm'd*, this young aſſaulter? came he
With *malice ?* or for *robbery ?* Be of comfort.
He attack'd thee, thy defence was neceſſary.
And ſad neceſſity makes all things juſt.

Eum. Heaven is my witneſs, I provok'd him not.
Tis not in valour's wiſh, to *offer* inſult :
And ſure ! it is no *crime*, to check it *offer'd.*

Mer. On, then—relate the chance, that led thee hither.

Eum. Ent'ring your borders, I beheld a *temple*,
Sacred to Hercules ; the God, my ſoul,
Low, as my lot was caſt, *aſpires* to honour.
What ſhou'd I do ? bare vot'ry as I was !
I had *no off'rings :* brought no *victims*, with me.
Poor, and oppreſs'd by fortune, what I *cou'd*,
I *gave* I knelt, and pour'd a *heart* before him,
Warm, as a hundred hecatombs ! pure and humble,
Pious, and firm.—Th' unhappy *can* no more.
I aſk'd not, for *myſelf*, his undue bleſſing.
I pray'd protection, to his *own* high race :
For, I had *heard*, great Queen ! your wrongs *requir'd* it.
The *preſent God*, methought, *receiv'd* my prayer.
His altar trembled ; and his temple rung !
Keen, undulating. Glories beam'd, about me :
I know not how I *bore* it ! --but, my heart,
Full of the force infus'd, at once grew *vaſter.*
My ſwelling courage, far *above myſelf*,
Suſtain'd me :—and I *glow'd*, with all the *God.*

Mer. [*Riſing in emotion.*] Go on. Methinks, the God
thou nam'ſt ſpeaks *in* thee !

And

And ev'ry *hearer* glows, as warm'd as thou!
Eum. I bow'd, and left the temple—Following,
Two men, of haughty ſtride, with angry lowre:
Roughly, accoſting, they reproach'd my prayer.
How did I dare, they aſk'd, ſolicit Heaven,
To aid ſedition's purpoſes? No God
Shou'd *ſave* a wretch like me, proſcrib'd by powe
—I heard, aſtoniſh'd; and prepar'd to ſpeak:
When, with impatient fierceneſs, each rais'd arm,
With rage conjoin'd, came on.
Mer. [*Interrupting.*] Both!—came they,—
To wound thee?—
Eum. Both, with madman's frenzy,
Struck at my breaſt, ignobly.
Mer. Thou has eas'd me.
Go on.—Theſe men had ſouls, that match'd their
Eum. Unarm'd, and inoffenſive, ſo ſurpriz'd,
The God I had addreſs'd *repaid* my prayer.
—Warding the weakeſt ſtroke, with ſwordleſs hand,
Swiftly I clos'd, and ſeiz'd the wreſted ſteel
From him whoſe ſtronger arm more nearly preſs'd
Seiz'd it with lightning's ſwiftneſs: for, oppreſſion
Rowſes diſtreſs, to vengeance—On himſelf,
I turn'd his pointed weapon: ſav'd *my* breaſt,
And plung'd it in his own.—He fell.—The other
Started, and curs'd: but, like a coward, *fled*,
Falſe to his dying fellow.—Mighty Queen,
This is the ſad ſhort truth. May the kind Power
I bow'd to, touch your ear; and move your pity!
Mer. She were a tygreſs, that cou'd hear this tale
And pauſe, upon thy pardon—Still, go on:
How wer't thou ſeiz'd? hide nothing: and hope al
Eum. Shock'd by uncertain dread for what was d
I gaz'd aſtoniſh'd round: and mark'd, beneath,
Where, at a furlong's diſtance, the ſalt wave
Broke on the ſhore. Sudden I ſnatch'd the corpſe,
And, haſt'ning to the beach, gave it to the *ſea*.
That done, I ſigh'd, and fled: your guards, great Qu

For what eſcapes ſuch eyes, as *Heaven's*, and *yours!*
Unſeen by me, mark'd all; follow'd, and took me.
Mer. [*To* Euricles.] Did he *reſiſt*, when ſeiz'd?
Eum. I *cou'd not*, Madam.
The name of Merope diſarm'd my *will.*
They told me they were yours. I bow'd, and yielded.
Gave 'em my new-gain'd *ſword:* and took their *chains.*
Eur. This youth, by him he kill'd, was judg'd *another.*
Mer. Oh! I have noted all: and Heaven was *juſt.*
—Retire, to farther diſtance, gentle youth.——
I'll tell thee, Euricles!
Methought, at every word this wanderer ſpoke,
Pity —— or ſomething, *tenderer* than pity,
Clung to my aking heart-ſtrings! nay, 'twas *ſtranger!*
For, I will tell thee all.—— Creſphontes' features,
Heav'ns, what ideas hopes and fears can raiſe!
My dear dead manly *Lord's* reſembled features;
I ſaw, and trac'd, (I bluſh, to think what folly!)
Trac'd,—in this cottage hero's honeſt face.
Iſm. Compaſſion is a kind and generous painter.
—Yet, Truth herſelf muſt grow as *blind*, as Fortune,
Ere ſhe cou'd look on that unhappy youth;
And find him *leſs*, than worth her kindeſt pity.
Eur. Iſmene ſpeaks *my* thoughts. He's innocent.
The Gods have ſtamp'd their mark of candor on him:
And no *impoſtor's art* inhabits there.
Mer. [*To* Eumenes.] Again, approach me.—In what part of Greece
Did it pleaſe Heaven to give thee birth, good youth?
Eum. [*Advancing.*] In Elis, generous Queen.
Mer. In Elis?——Tell me.
I hop'd, it had been nearer.——Haſt thou, ever,
In thy low converſe, heard the ſwains, thy neighbours,
Mention the name of Narbas?—or Eumenes?——
—The laſt, thou *muſt* have heard of.
Eum. Never, Madam.
Mer. Never?—That's *ſtrange!* What then was thy condition?

What

What thy employment? and thy father's name?
Eum. My father was a *ſhepherd:* learn'd, and wiſe;
Prince of the ſylvan ſhades, and paſt'ral vale,
He led th' attracted hearts of liſt'ning ſwains,
And pleas'd 'em into ſubjects—in himſelf
Too humble, for diſtinction—had not virtue
Compell'd him into notice.——
He liv'd unenvied: for, excelling all,
He veil'd ſuperior eminence, by *modeſty:*
No claim'd exemption eas'd his life from *care:*
Peacefully poor! and reverently belov'd!
His fleecy harveſts fed him: and, his name
Was Policletes, Madam.
Mer. What thy *own?*
Eum. Low, like my paſt'ral care——to cottage ears
Adapted——and unform'd for your regard.
——Yet, Elis, oft, may deign to ſpeak of—Dorilas.
Mer. Oh! I have loſt my hope. Heaven mocks relief;
And every ſtarting ſpark is quench'd, in darkneſs.
So, then, your parents held no *rank* in Greece?
Eum. Did rank draw claim from goodneſs, they have rights
Wou'd leave all place behind 'em. Inborn virtue
Can borrow no enlargement, but lends all
That keeps *contempt* from titles.
Mer. Every word
He utters has a charm!——But, *why*, at home
So bleſs'd, and to *ſuch* parents, doubly dear,
Didſt thou, forgetful of the care thou ow'dſt 'em,
Quit their kind *cott*, and leave 'em to their *tears?*
Eum. A vain deſire of *glory*, firſt ſeduc'd me.
Oft had I heard my father mourn Mycene,
Weep for her civil wars, and ſuff'ring *Queen.*
Oft, had he charm'd my young, aſpiring, ſoul,
With wonder, at your firmneſs!——So, inflam'd,
I learnt, by ſlow degrees, to think my *youth*
Diſgrac'd, by home-felt virtues: weigh'd the call
Of glory, againſt *duty*: and grew bold

To

To hope, *my* humble arm might add ſome aid
To prop your warring ſtandards.—See, great Queen,
The only motive of my erring raſhneſs.
For, Heaven has taught me, tho' it loves *your* cauſe,
Merit my diſtreſs: who left my father,
Wanting, perhaps, in age's feeble calls,
Some help, I might have lent him.——'Twas a fault.
Yet, 'twas my *firſt*: and I may live, to mend it.
Mer. [*Aſide.*] Methinks, I hear Eumenes—So, my ſoul
Informs me, had *he* known deſcent, thus lowly,
So, my Eumenes wou'd have thought, and ſpoke.
Such, is his age, where'er conceal'd he mourns:
Perhaps too, ſuch his fortune—driven, like *this*,
From realm to realm, a wand'rer, thus unknown!
Friendleſs, and hopeleſs, and expos'd to poverty!
—I will have pity, on this youth's diſtreſs:
And cultivate his fortune.——What bold noiſe?
[*Shouts heard without.*
Whence can ſuch rudeneſs flow!—What is't, Iſmene?
Iſm. [*At a window.*] All ills are Poliphontes. The vile rabble
Shout their ſure vote, for treaſon. Poliphontes
Is *King*, proclaim'd—and hope is now no more.
Eum. Oh! for the *ſword*, once more, your guards took from me!
Now, now, I *feel* theſe chains: now, firſt, they *bind* me.
Mer. *Give* him his ſword. Let him be free, as air.
Honeſt propoſer!—But, *thy* help's too weak,
To prop a throne, in danger.——
Eum. O, Queen!——*forgive* preſumption, in the *poor*,
When *they* dare pity greatneſs.
All have their mis'ries—but, when *crowns* grow wretched,
'Tis arrogance, in *mean* ones, to complain.
[*Exit* Eumenes.
Eur. Too fatally, I propheſied——confeſs
This hard neceſſity: which, now, you find;
And *ſeem*, at leaſt, to ſooth the tyrant's hope.
Mer. I miſconceiv'd the Gods. I durſt not dream,

They

They cou'd have bid guilt thrive: and given up *virt*
Eur. They *will not*, Madam.
Mer. So, my ſad heart, ſtill,
Struggles to hope: and, if they mark my *woe*,
They will forgive my *raſhneſs*.
Eur. Come what muſt!
I will aſſemble round you the few faithful,
And, failing to protect, partake your fall. [*Exit* Euric

SCENE III. Merope, Iſmene.

Mer. O, people! people! they, who truſt your fai
Bid the wild winds blow conſtant.
Iſm. The *people's* voice is call'd, the voice of Gods.
Mer. What villain baſeneſs wants ſome bold pretence
That drags in *Heaven*, to grace it? Theſts, plots, perjuri
Avarice, revenge, the bloody zeal of *pride*,
And unforgiving bitterneſs of heart;
All—have their Gods to friend! their prieſts, to ſancti

SCENE IV. Merope, Iſmene, Euricles, *with a ſwo*

Eur. Sorrow on ſorrows bear down hope's laſt prop.
Now, be a Queen, indeed!——arm your great heart,
With preparation, to its utmoſt ſtretch:
—For, if it ſtands *this* ſhock, its power's immortal.
Mer. No——I am ſinking, from all *ſenſe* of pain:
And ſhall grow *ſafe*, by want of ſtrength to ſuffer.
Speak—there is now but one ſad truth to dread:
And my ſoul waits it heard;——then, reſts, for ever.
Eur. It has pleas'd Heaven—this *ſword!* this fa
ſword!
Mer. I underſtand thee; thou wou'dſt ſay, he's *dea*
Eur. Oh! 'tis too ſurely ſo: th' atrocious crime
At laſt, ſucceeded—— and all care is vain.
Mer. Gods! Gods!——'tis done.—now all your bo
have ſtruck me.
Iſm. Guard her diſtracted brain!

E

Eur. Save her, kind Heaven!
Mer. What have I done? *Where* have I been?
Eur. Alas! where grief, too oft,
Has left th' unhappy!——Recollect.
Mer. Oh! Euricles: I recollect, too much.
Truſt my ſuſtaining heart, it breaks not, *yet*.
Comfort's brief clouds, methought, came ſhadowing o'er me,
But I am *found*, again: a wretch, ſo friendleſs,
That *madneſs* will not lend relief: but *ſhuns* me.
Eur. Periſh, that young, that impious hypocrite!
That ill-admir'd attracter of your pity:
Whom your protection ſpar'd — for fancied virtue!
Mer. Who?——What?——
Iſm. *Not* Dorilas?
Eur. *Him, him,*——That Dorilas.
Mer. Monſter! beyond all credit of deceit!
Iſm. *He!*——'tis impoſſible.
Eur. *He* was the murderer.
I bring too clear a proof. Paſſing, but now,
I found him waiting: freed him from his chains;
And, to re-arm him, for the cauſe he choſe:
Call'd for his *ſword*—Which, as he ſtretch'd his hand
To take, I mark'd, and trembled at the view,
Theſe once known *gems* — too well remember'd, *here!*
Mer. [*Taking the ſword.*] O, all ye ſleeping Gods!
'twas my Creſphontes',
'Twas the *King's* ſword. Narbas, beyond all doubting,
Sav'd it, that dreadful night, for my Eumenes.
Oh! what a falſe vile tale this flatterer form'd,
To cheat us into pardon!
Take the dumb dreadful witneſs from my ſight.
[*Giving* Euricles *the ſword*;
Yet, ſtay——return it me.——
[*Reſumes the ſword—and kneels,*
——I *thank* ye——Gods!
Thank your inſpiring juſtice: and *accept* it.
Live, *but* to thank you——for this dire, due, ſacrifice;

Which, from the childleſs mother's widow'd hand,
Your Heav'n-directed vengeance well *demands*. [*She*
Yes, I will *ſheathe* it, on my huſband's *tomb*,
Deep, in the *bleeding murd'rer's* panting heart;
Then, ſcorning Poliphontes, pierce my *own*;
So, die, reveng'd, and ſafe,—*abſolving* Heaven.
——Go, Euricles.——

Eur. Not *ſo*.— Yet *hear* his ſight:
That, from his own dire mouth, we may compel
Diſcovery, of his guilt's commiſſion'd *cauſe*:
And, to the bottom, ſearch this fatal tale. [*Exit* Euri

Iſm. Erox!——the tyrant's miniſter of death.

SCENE V. Merope, Iſmene, Erox.

Erox. [*Aſide.*] Now, aid me, wily powers of winning
Mer. How now! What bold intruſion plac'd thee h
Erox. Queen, of the kingdom's Lord! his he
high Empreſs!
Suffer a voice, unequal to the taſk,
To wrong th' intruſted ſenſe of *his* told grief
Who ſends me to *condole* you.—Poliphontes,
Had you but ſmooth'd that brow's majeſtic bend,
I meant to have ſaid, the *King*,—this moment, he
The fate, moſt pitied, of the Prince, your *ſon*,
Heard, and takes equal part, in all your wrongs.

Mer. *More*, than his part, he takes, in what is mi
Elſe, had he never dar'd aſpire, to ſeize
His maſter's throne; nor *name* my murder'd ſon.

Erox. Wiſhing, he waits but *leave*. Reſpect is *delica*
And wou'd not, unadmitted, *now*, approach.
Fain wou'd he talk of comfort, to *your* ſorrows,
Who, weeping, wants the power to curb his *own*.

Mer. What wou'd your artful ſender come, to *ſay*

Erox. To beg, that to *his* hand you wou'd commit
This hateful murd'rer's *puniſhment*.—He glows
For vengeance in your cauſe. Shou'd think his claim
Unworthy a crown's truſt; leſs worthy *yours*,

Co

d he forget, that *juſtice* props a throne.
er. No. Tell him *no*. My hand revenges, here.
ſhort of reach, Heaven knows! but, what it *can*
ll: and neither aſks, nor bears, *his* aid.
ox. The King too tenderly regards your will,
roſs it, ev'n in *anger* —— leſs, in *reaſon*.
I humbly take my leave.
er. I grant it, gladly. [*Exit* Erox.
ted on every ſide, why waits diſtreſs,
ſtill *new* growths of anguiſh, *more*, oppreſs?
poor a thing is *life*, drag'd on to age,
tand; the pitied mark of Fortune's rage!
h ſhuts out miſ'ry: and can, beſt, reſtrain
bite of inſult, and the goad of pain.

ACT III. SCENE I.

The Tomb of Creſphontes.

Narbas *alone*.

AIL venerable ſcene! Hail ſacred ſhade!
Hail ſad-ſought *manes* of my long-lov'd Lord!
eyes laſt object on Mycenian earth,
thy dear life and empire loſt in blood;
late returning, their firſt mourning ſearch,
ls in this cold ſtill tomb, the whole ſhrunk reach
hy contracted reign! Yet here, ev'n here,
re thy Eumenes render'd back, even here,
bas had held ſome hope to ſooth thy ghoſt.
low ſhall I meet his *mother's* mournful eye,
o bring *new* weight, to woes *o'ercharg'd before*.
m every madd'ning ſtreet, I hear loud ſhouts,
oſe execrable bawds, to flatter'd Power!
claim the traitor Poliphontes, King.

He! who, from clime to clime, track'd our ſad wa
Held, like a hunted deer, his Prince, in chace;
Hot in purſuit, for *murder!*—Each known proſpect
Each point, each outlet of this neighb'ring palace,
Brings to afflicted mem'ry ſome new ſtroke
Of ſorrow, freſh to pain —tho' fifteen winters
Have ſnow'd their whiteneſs on me, ſince they fell!
Wou'd, I cou'd find the face of ſome old friend!
But, what court friendſhip's life *laſts*, fifteen winters
—Soft. Whom has Heaven ſent here! If innocen
Dwells yet on earth, ſuch looks as theſe muſt *houſe* i
[*Starts, as* Iſmene *comes ne*
Bleſs the reſembled *mother's* copied ſoftneſs!
'Tis my Iſmene: 'tis my own dear *daughter.*
Time cannot hide her, from a parent's eye:
Child as ſhe was——and chang'd ſince laſt I ſaw her

SCENE II. Narbas, Iſmene, *follow'd by a tra virgins in white, who bring baſkets, and ſtrew flowe the tomb.*

Iſm. Who is this bold unknown? ſo ſagely form'
Yet indiſcreetly rude——at ſuch an hour,
To break, abruptly, on the Queen's ſad purpoſe!
Nar. Faireſt, of forms——
Iſm. Who *are* you?
Nar. Chide me not,
Sweet picture of the Powers, who ſhed ſoft pity!
---I am a nameleſs, friendleſs, weak, old man.
Once, I was ſervant, to the Queen *you* ſerve;
O, grant the gracious privilege, to *ſee* her.
Iſm. Rev'rend, and wiſe! The firſt, I ſee you *are:*
The laſt, my heart conceives you——What a time
Have your miſguided wants unaptly choſen!
Your ſight wou'd, now, offend her.—Deep diſtreſs,
From dire ſolemnity of purpoſe, brings her.
---'Twere prudent to withdraw.
Nar. [*In a low voice.*] Come near——Iſmene.

Ism. Immortal Powers! Who can it be?---he knows me!
ain would I dare mix *hope*, with fear and wonder.
[*Approaching him.*
Nar. Thou art my *child*. Kind Heaven has sent thee
to me.
-Be cautious —— and observe.
Ism. [*Kneeling.*] Prophetic heart!
h, Sir——I *cannot* speak!
Nar. [*Raising her.*] Hide thy surprize,
re yet some dang'rous *note* detects our meeting.
-Soft as thy eyes, Ismene, be thy *voice*.
nd answer to my question—Round this tomb,
hy thus assembled moves that virgin train?
Ism. Alas! the afflicted Queen,
istracted comes,——to offer on this tomb,
er life's *last* sacrifice——a dreadful victim!
-The *murd'rer* of her *son*.
Nar. Eumenes, dead?
Ism. Alas, Sir! cou'd you be a stranger to it?
Nar. Blast! of my soul's best hope.—Who *dar'd* this
villainy?
Ism. A youth, who found him in Alcides' *temple*.
ne, from whose air of manly modesty
one, surely cou'd have fear'd.—Behold! he *comes*.
hat fetter'd criminal is he.——Oh, Sir!
here will you, now, be hid?
Nar. In death, Ismene:
I now hear and see—and am not *dreaming!*
Ism. From the Queen's eye, I dare no longer.
Nar. [*Holding her.*] Stay.
ueens, Kings, nor Gods, shall tear thee from my arm,
ll thou hast heard me fully.

SCENE III.

Solemn procession to a dead *march.* Merope, Euricles, *the sword.* Eumenes, *in chains. Guards, Priests to sacrifice.* —— *The Queen goes up weeping, and k silent, at the tomb; while the rest range themselves each side the scene.*

Nar. [*To Ism.*] Some black-soul'd *fiend*, some fury from hell,
Has darken'd all discernment!—Call'dst thou not
That fetter'd youth the *murd'rer* of Eumenes?
Ism. I call'd him so too truly.
Nar. He is Eumenes.
What angry God misleads the Queen, to madness?
She dreams Eumenes *kill'd*—and *kills* Eumenes!
Ism. Now are my heart's late tremblings well explain
Quick let me rush, and *warn* her erring hand.
Nar. Not, for a thousand worlds. — To save him,
Were but to lose him, *furer.* — Polyphontes
Has ears and eyes too near us. —
I may anon find means, when all are busied,
To hide my self, unmask'd, amidst the crowd.

Sad and solemn music. Then a song of sacrifice. Mr. Bea *as Chief Priest.*

Hear, from the dark and silent shade!
Hear, ye pale bands of *Death!*
Gliding from *graves*, where once your *bones* were laid,
Receive a murd'rer's breath.
Chorus of Priests and Virgins.
Receive a murd'rer's breath.
Mer. [*Rising and coming forward.*] Where is this victi
——odious, to all Powers,
But *one*—the dreadful Nemesis?
[*The guards bring up* Eumene
Eur. Yet, ere he dies,
'Twer

were fit ſome force of torture ſhould compel him
o name his vile accomplices.
Mer. It *ſhall*.
y, monſter, what provok'd thee to this guilt:
nd what aſſociates join'd thee?
Eum. I appeal
he Gods, who find it fit my ſoul ſhou'd buy,
this dear rate, the moment's hope you lent it;
hoſe *Gods* can *witneſs* for me; they! who curſe
he perjur'd; and diſclaim the baſe one's ſafety.
y lips deteſt impoſture:
Nor know I, by what change, in Heaven's high will,
who of late ſo bleſs'd, had touch'd your *pity*,
ll, now, beneath your *anger!*
Mer. [*Taking the ſword from* Euricles.] View this ſword,
ow you the dreadful object?
Eum. 'Twas the villain's,
y juſt hand puniſh'd with it.
Mer. Seize him. Rend him.
ift to the deſtin'd altar, drag the traitor.
e *owns* it! glories in his bloody crime:
nd my ſhock'd ſoul *akes* at him. [*The guards ſeize him.*
Eum. [*Struggling.*] Off---away---
are your officious graſp—I *will* be heard;
he laſt loud word,—in ſpite of arms and inſult.
Mer. [*After a ſignal to the guards, who quit* Eumenes.]
hou then, who deal'ſt in death, can'ſt find death fearful.
Eum. No, Madam! you miſtake. Death ſhakes the *happy*;
t he who is a wretch receives him gladly.
Yet, 'gainſt imputed guilt, the humbleſt, wrong'd,
ſe, bold in innocence.
—Tell me, nor let your pride deface your pity,
Whoſe, ſo high-rated blood was this I ſhed?
—If he was dear to *you*, curs'd be my memory,
r I had rather loſt my *own* than *his*.
Mer. Where has this cruel wretch been taught deceit?
Why was that look, ſo like Creſphontes, his!
[*Half fainting.*

Eur. Great Queen! ſuſtain your purpoſe. Think
vengeance.
The laws of Nature,—— and the lives of Kings.
Eum. Do Laws and Kings, then, call injuſtice *vengean*
Shame on the great! why long'd my eyes for *courts?*
Courts, where the pride of guilt lays claim to honour.
—Haughty of heart, why have they ſouls thus abject
They threaten, praiſe, fright, flatter, and inſult me!
—— Yet, oh! twas *juſt* ——— I left my father, raſhly
Felt not the pangs; weigh'd not the tears I coſt him
Fate drew me from my foreſt's guiltleſs quiet,
Deaf to the warnings of a father's wiſdom:
And griev'd a mother's bodings.
Mer. Mother, ſaid he!
Barbarian! haſt thou yet a *mother* left thee?
I *was* a mother too ——— till thy *fell* hand
Depriv'd me of a *ſon* —— and all life's comforts.
Eum. A ſon!—*your* ſon?
Mer. Mine, monſter! murd'rer! mine.
Eum. If *ſuch* was my misfortune, ſuch my *curſe*,
If Heaven has made it *poſſible*—that he,
Who in a fatal moment, err'd---and fell
By my ill-deſtin'd raſhneſs, was *your* ſon,
Earth holds not ſuch another wretch as I am!
And mercy's fainteſt glimpſe ſhou'd ſhun to reach me.
[Eumenes, *here, offers to ſpeak, and* Mero
interrupts him.
Mercy! thou hypocrite.—If thou dar'ſt *pray*,
Raiſe thy dumb *hands:* and aſk, in vain, from Heave
The mercy, thou denieddſt my dying ſon.
Eum. Yet hear------
Mer. Stop his deteſted mouth;
Force the doom'd victim to the altar's foot,
Veil him from *light*, no more to be beheld:
Hide his quench'd *eyes*, for ever.
[*Two Prieſts approaching, with a veil, he ſnatc*
it, and throws it from him.
Eum. Off! ye vain *forms!*

Cov

ver the eyes of *cowards*: mine diſdain ye.
ne can, with ſtedfaſt and *advancing ſcorn*,
ok in death's *face*, full-fighted.---When it comes,
is to be *met*, not *hid*.----
elcome, eternal day;---*bad world*, farewel.
[*Advances, between the Prieſts, to the tomb---follow'd by the Queen*, Euricles, Iſmene, &c.
Mer. [*At the tomb--with the ſword drawn, and* Eumenes *kneeling ready.*
ade, of my murder'd *huſband!*---*hear* my call.
Chorus, of ſingers' voices.
! hear.
Mer. Soul of my bleeding *ſon!* hear, *thou*---
Chorus, of ſingers' voices.
! hear.
Mer. Un-expiated ſouls!---if in thoſe glooms,
here walk the ſullen ghoſts of earth-wrong'd Kings,
ou hear atonement's voice, and wait redreſs,
ſe, from your dire domains!
Chorus, of ſingers' voices.
! riſe.
Mer. ——*Thou*, laſt,
remend'ous Pow'r! pale Goddeſs! preſent, ſtill,
o direful *vengeance!* nerve this lifted arm,
nd *thus* aſſiſting ——
[Iſmene *preventing the blow*, Narbas *breaks into ſight, and cries out loudly,*
ay, ſtay that bloody purpoſe.
eath has already been too buſy, here:
nd Heaven diſclaims ſuch ſacrifice.
Mer. [*In a frighted and trembling attitude.*] Who *art* thou?
Eur. O, 'tis Narbas!
autious conceal this chance, or ruin finds him.
Iſm. [*Aſide---to the Queen.*] Your victim is your *ſon*,---the Prince, Eumenes.
[Merope *lets fall the ſword---aſtoniſh'd, and trembling.*
Eum. [*Riſing himſelf to look round.*] I heard a well-known voice, now heard no longer.

Open,

Open, sad eyes! once more, from the grave's brink
And find what *seem'd*---Oh! 'tis---it is---my *father!*
Narb. [*Aside, to* Eumenes.] Hear, and be mute. T
fate, unwary youth!
Depends upon thy *silence.*
Eum. Whence, O ye Powers!
Can all these myst'ries rise!
Mer. Oh!---'tis too much---
And life and I are *lost.*
[*Faints and is supported by* Ism
Narb. Assist the Queen.
Ism. Stay your unhallow'd *rites:* the Queen's in dang
Eur. Quit, rev'rend *Priests!* your unpropitious sacrif
[*Exeunt Pri*
Follow me, Guards; I will secure your *victim.*
Eum. O, father---
Narb. [*To* Eumenes] Shun me: and patient wait
important *cause.*
Eum. O, bid me, ere I die, but hope your pardon
And, if I leave *you* bless'd---'tis all my prayer.
Narb. No more.---The Gods, who love, *reward* t
virtue! [*The soldiers, and* Eur. *go off with* Eu
Ism. Kind Heaven restores the Queen.
Mer. Where!---whither have ye brought me?---
---Ismene! what means this?---Why weep my virgins
---Oh! I have *kill'd* him:---[*Looking wildly round her.*]---
I see him *not:*
And I am doom'd to pains, in life immortal.
Narb. Ease your sad heart's too apprehensive starting
Euricles has secur'd him: and nothing's known.
Mer. Still that kind vision haunts me.---Art thou Narba
Narb. Let my *tears* answer ---in this gush of joy---
I give you back my trust, my King Eumenes.
Mer. [*On her knees.*] Oh, gracious Heaven! support
woman's weakness:
And, what my *heart,* yet panting, fails to *utter,*
Take, from my soul's touch'd sense; and *make* my pray
You are too *great,* for thanks! too *good,* for duty! [*Ris*
Eu

Eur. [*Re-entering haſtily.*] Death! to th' inſatiate ty-
rant's thirſt of inſult!
—This royal ſcandal, to the name he ſteals,
as, with ſome fatal purpoſe, *ſeiz'd* the King;
nd holds him, to examine.
Mer. Follow me.
ow ſhall he ſee, what *marks* denote the *Queen*;
hat *diff'rence*, 'twixt the guilty, and the wrong'd.
Narb. [*Going*] Madam! — it muſt not be.
Eur. Stay: curb this raſhneſs.
Mer. Is he not *mine!* Is he not *yours?*—your *King?*
Eur. The moment you confeſs that dang'rous truth,
God, but hated Hymen, ſaves Eumenes.
Mer. There, thou haſt let in light, upon my ſoul.
—Rather than *wed* this Poliphontes.——
Narb. Wed him?
ED——Poliphontes!
Eur Him.
Narb. The world's laſt groan,
rapt in ſurrounding fires, had *leſs* amaz'd me!
Eur. 'Tis with that view the people call him *King*.
ce he reveng'd Creſphontes' *blood*, they ſay,
, beſt ——
Narb. He!---Every curſe of death ſurround him!
e! He reveng'd!---The villain's own damn'd train
ed,---*ſpilt* it. I beheld 'em, trac'd the *fiend*
ro' all his dark diſguiſes — thro' night's eye
w the pale murd'rer ſtalk, amidſt his furies.
s was the half-hid torch,---the poſtern key,
at open'd to the rebel's rage the palace.
In the pierc'd infant breaſts of *two* doom'd innocents,
aw him plunge his poinard: twice receiv'd it,
eep, in my *own*, encumber'd with my charge:
ruggling, to bear the third *ſav'd* Prince to ſhelter;
nd, track'd by my loſt blood, with pain eſcap'd him.
Mer. When will my growing horrors reach their *end!*
n! my fix'd hate was *inſtinct*. Something, fatal,
welt on his dreadful brow, and bad me *ſhun* him.

Blind! headlong! ill-diſcerning! noiſe-driv'n people
Eur. [*Looking out.*] Soft! the tyrant *comes!*
Mer. Can the Gods leave that *poſſible?* ——
Narbas, be *bid*, this moment—— [*Exit* Nar
—— Euricles!
Fly thou ——find to my mournful ſon acceſs,
Comfort his fears——but keep the ſecret from him.
[*Exit* Euric

SCENE IV.

Merope, Iſmene, Poliphontes *in nuptial robes*, Ero
and Train.

Pol. Health, to my *Sovereign, late!* Now---ſo the Sta
Decree—my wife!—my ſiſter! and my ſoul!
Dreſs'd is the altar; and the prieſts attend.
——Nay, do not turn aſide, and ſhun your triumph.
Look—and admire the wonders of your power!
The God of love, to-day, ſmooths all my wrinkles:
And I am taught by joy to ſmile back *youth.*
——One care alone precedes impatient love.
They tell me, your too tender heart *recoil'd:*
And *loſt* your purpos'd vengeance.——Let it *be.*
Beauty was meant to *wound*, a gentler way.
Mine, be the ſtroke of juſtice.—When I view
This murd'rous ſtripling, thro' the grief he brought yo
Pity diſdains his cauſe; and fate *demands* him.
Mer. I find myſelf, 'tis true, too weak, for vengean
Wou'd I had power, more equal to my wrongs!
Pol. Leave it to *me:* 'tis a King's right.—I *claim* i
Mer. I ſhall *conſider* of it.
Pol. Why? what doubt you?
Slackens your anger? that your vengeance heſitates!
Is your ſon's mem'ry now, leſs dear, than lately?
Mer. Periſh, the *will*, that wrongs him! But this murd'r
This *youth*——they tell me you ſuſpect accomplices—
Were it not prudent to ſuſpend his fate,

'T

ill he declares, who join'd him?
Pol. What expect you
clear, beyond your ſon's known fall?
Mer. His *father's* ——
hat was a cup of *gall.*—Oh! conſcious guilt!
ow dumb, thy voice, unlook'd for, ſtrikes the bold!
[*Aſide.*
Pol. [*After a pauſe.*] Well—ev'n of that too, we ourſelf will aſk him.
Mer. You are too buſy, Sir! in a purſuit,
hat leaſt, admits *your* quick'ning.
Pol. Strange perplexity!
hat what moſt ſeeks your eaſe ſhou'd moſt *offend!*
t, ſpring it, whence it may, the *cauſe* remov'd,
here, ends the doubt, and pain.—This wretch ſhall *die.* [*Going.*
Mer. Barbarian! horrible, inhuman—*Sir!*
hy have you ſought to ſtartle me?—I fear'd——
ou meant to ſnatch my victim from—my vengeance.
Pol. But—ſhall he *really* die?
Mer. Die!---*Who?*---He---die?
Pol. This murd'rer of your ſon?
Mer. I go, this moment;
nd will, alone, examine him.
Pol. Stay, Madam.
his new embarraſſment, of mingled pains;
his tenderneſs in rage; theſe hopes, fears, ſtartings,
his art, to colour ſome ill-hid diſtreſs,
hat caſts *confuſion* o'er your troubled ſoul:
Half ſentences, broke ſhort; looks, fill'd with horror;
re Nature's thin *diſguiſe*, to cover danger.
-Something, you will not *tell*, alarms my caution;
nd bids my ſummon'd *fear* take place of love.
-In ent'ring, here, I had a glimpſe, but now,
f an old man, who ſeem'd to ſhun my preſence.
Why is he fled?—Who was he?
Mer. Scarce yet call'd
King—and ſee! already fill'd with jealouſies!

Pol.

Pol. Be kind, and bear your part, then.--Burthens, tha
Preſs light the eas'd ſuſtainers.—Come; your hand.
Mer. A moment ſince, you talk'd but of revenge:
Now, 'tis again all love—Away: keep ſeparate,
Two paſſions, nature never yet ſaw join'd.
Pol. Let it be ſo, then. Death ſhall ſtrait remove
That obſtacle: and but one wiſh remains.
Follow, at leiſure, *you*: while I prepare. [*Exit* P
Mer. Act for me, now, and ſave me, great Alcid
To power like thine, all things are poſſible:
And grief, oppreſs'd on earth, finds friends in heaven
Then when the woe-ſunk heart is tir'd with care,
And every *human* proſpect bids *deſpair*,
Break but one gleam of *heav'nly* comfort, in;
And a new race of *triumphs*, thence, begin.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

The Caſtle of Poliphontes.

Poliphontes, Erox.

Pol. SHE has *her* views, I mine.—I ſhou'd have fear'
Some hint's officious reach had touch'd her ear
I ſhou'd have dreamt, her eyes had catch'd ſome glan
To guide *diſcovery*, down the dark abyſs,
Where my cloſe crime lies *veil'd* in dumb obſcurity.
——But, that I know, ſhe is a WOMAN—Erox!
A id *born* to be capricious.
Erox. Pride——not diſtaſte,
Holds out her heart, againſt you.
Pol. Let her keep it.
My hope is humbler, Erox. 'Tis her hand
I ſeek: *hearts* are girls' gifts to ſchool-boy lovers.
Now, let her ſpleen ſtart wild. When time ſerves aptl
Means ſhall be found to curb it.—Thou art come

Fro

m founding this fierce captive son of wonder,
at have thy thoughts concluded?
rox. 'Tis not *he*.
race of Hercules need there alarm you.
s but some rural brave, of simple nurture;
d of ambition's flame: bold, blunt and honest:
leſs of menace, taſteleſs of reward,
l wanting ev'n the wiſh, to dare, for power.
cannot be Eumenes.
ol. Who, then, is he?
rox. He ſays he is a *ſhepherd's* ſon;—what, more,
will not be provok'd, nor brib'd, to tell.
n without fierceneſs, without weakneſs, gentle:
n as day-light; yet, as dumb, as death!
e of my prejudice, he forc'd my praiſe;
l *hatred* muſt admire him.
ol. Praiſe him on.
what, or whom, he may, 'tis fit he *die*.
people, who conclude his puniſhment
cted, for Eumenes' fancy'd murder,
l dream that race *extinct*; and cleave to *me*.
anger comes leſs near: nor ſhakes my throne.
What haſt thou learnt, of that conceal'd preſumer,
o, when the arm of Merope was rais'd,
rain'd it, with ſome power that touch'd her ſoul?
rox. The young man call'd him *father*. Chance, it ſeems,
hat nice moment, brought him to his view.
mov'd the Queen's compaſſion, for his ſon,
like a wanton, from the good man's care,
o in his ſearch, came ſorrowing, from Elis.
ol. I cannot truſt this tale. Thou grow'ſt too credulous.
terious caution hangs too thick a *veil*
all their late proceedings. That old man
the Queen's preſence, ſtarting, at my entrance.
y was he hid, if a young ruſtic's father?
y ſhou'd *my* coming fright him? He has heard
e then, his ſon's redoubled danger dwells
in *my* menace; yet he comes not near me.

I had,

I had, ere now, beheld him at my feet,
Had his heart trembled with a father's terrors.
Erox. See Sir! he's *free*--and mark--the Queen how
Pol. I note it, and determine.
——Now! my ſifter.

SCENE II.

Poliphontes, Erox, Merope, Iſmene, Euricles, Eu
and Guards.

Mer. You ſee, Sir! I dare know, and *uſe*, my rig
How had your will preſum'd to ſeize my victim?
Am I but Queen of ſhadows? that my vengeance
Muſt move, as *you* direct it?
Pol. Nobly urg'd!
The victim is your right, requires *your* hand:
Mine had defac'd your vengeance.——I aſſum'd
Pretence to aid it, but to fire your languor.
Take courage. I reſign him. With his blood
Waſh this reluctant faintneſs from your heart:
And give it warmth to meet me at the altar.
Mer. Horrid, and impious, hope!
Pol. Looks *love* ſo frightful?
Eum. [*To Pol.*] Who taught thee to aſſociate love
cruelty?
What right has Cupid to a captive's blood?
—Yet, miſpreſume me not, that I court thy pity---
He has too poor a view from life, to *prize* it,
Whoſe death can only ſerve, to ſhorten *pain.*
—But, I am told, thou call'ſt thyſelf a *King:*
Know, if thou *art* one, that the poor have rights:
And power, in all its pride, is *leſs* than *juſtice.*
—I am a ſtranger—innocent,—and friendleſs,—
And that protection, which thou *ow'ſt*, to all,
Is doubly due, to me:——for, I'm unhappy.
Pol. Protection is for *worth*:—guilt calls for vengea
Eum. And what does wrong's licentious *inſult* call fo

In my own juſt defence, I *kill'd* a robber:
aw call'd it *murder*; and the Queen condemn'd me.
ueens may *miſtake*. Ev'n *Gods*, who LOVE, grow *partial*.
an forgive th' injuſtice of a *mother*:
nd cou'd have bleſs'd *her* hand beneath the blow.
ature has weakneſſes, that *err* to virtue?
But, what haſt *thou* to do with mother's vengeance?
w, that ſhocks *equity*, is *reaſon's* murder.
Pol. So young! ſo wretched!—and ſo *arrogant!*
ethinks, the pride of an *Alcides'* blood
u'd ſcarce have ſwell'd a ſoul to loftier *boldneſs!*
Mer. Pity preſumptuous heat. 'Tis youth's prerogative.
Pol. Mean while, how happy ſuch unpoliſh'd plainneſs!
o move defence, from art ſo ſkill'd as *yours*.
our ſon, ſure! *lives*.
Mer. Lives! and *ſhall* live. I truſt him to the *Gods*:
ey *can* —— they *did* —— they *will* protect him.
Pol. What cannot woman's pity! none, who marks
e willing pardon your ſoft looks inſure him,
n charge your heart with cruelty.
Mer. My looks,
rhaps, hint meanings, prudence ſhou'd decline
o lend too loud a *tongue* to. —— But, there *are*,
hoſe *heart ſpeaks* nothing: yet *tells all*, by actions.
Pol. Mark, if I ſpeak not, *now*, my heart's true language.
—*Traitor! receive thy doom.* [*Drawing his ſword.*
Mer. [*Interpoſing.*] Strike *here*, *here*, murd'rer!
enace *my* breaſt; not his.
Pol. Whoſe heart ſpeaks, *now?*
Eum. Now, ye Immortals! not to *die*, were, *not*
o triumph. ——To be pitied, *here!* ſo pitied!
r ſuch a Queen as Merope! —— 'tis glory
hat every power beneath a *God* might envy!
Pol. If you wou'd have him live, confeſs, *who is he?*
Mer. He—— is ——
Eur. [*To Iſmene.*] Oh! we are loſt.
Iſm. All, all, is hopeleſs.

Pol. If he has right in *you*, be ſwift to *own* him:
Or, *loſe* him by your ſilence. [*Offers to kill* Eum
Mer. Stay ——he is ———
Pol. Who? what? ——ſay, quickly.
Mer. He is *my* SON, Eumenes.
Pol. [*Starting, and aſide.*] 'Tis as I *fear'd*; and al
ſchemes are air. [*Stands penſively*
Eum. Heav'ns——Did I hear *that*, rightly?
Mer. [*Embracing him.*] Thou *art* my ſon.
Loud in the face of men and ear of Gods,
Creſphontes was thy father: I atteſt it:
I tell it, to the *winds:* proclaim it——boaſt it.
Hear it, *thou* ſoul of murder! I have *found* him:
And if I loſe him, *now*, whole Heav'n ſhall *curſe* the
Eum. I cannot comprehend it!——yet, I kneel,
To *thank* you—but for deigning to *deceive* me.
Bleſs'd is his fate, who dies in ſuch a *dream!*
Mer. One way, thou *art* deceiv'd.—The Mother's
Forgets the Monarch's danger.——Poliphontes!
Pol. [*Starting.*] Go on--I meditated--but--*ſpeak*, Ma
Mer. Thou now haſt wrung, from my affrighted he
The *ſecret*, that oppreſs'd it. Thou behold'ſt
Thy *King*, diſtreſs'd, before thee.——*Sigh*, if thou ca
Sigh,--for the Son, Prince, Mother---Fame, and Na
Pol. How to reſolve will aſk ſome needful pauſe.
—Mean while, it ſhakes my faith, to truſt your ſtor
You hear, the young man's honeſty *diſclaims*
This greatneſs, you wou'd lend him.
Eum. Modeſt ſenſe
Of my unequal worth compell'd ſome doubting;
But *now*, 'tis truth conteſtleſs. Royal *tears*
Flow not for pitied *falſehood*; and *they* prove it.
Mer. Tears touch not hearts of flint; and I will ſpare
Bid your **pride* hear me--for, your pity *cannot*. [**Kn*
See me an humble ſuppliant, at your feet,
Now firſt confeſſing I can *fear* your anger.
This ſhou'd, beyond all proof of tears, *convince* you,
That Merope's his *mother*.——Still, you frown:

I fo

rget
own long ſorrows---all my wrongs, and inſults;
le to the future——and abſolve the paſt.
et him *but breathe*---To reign, were to be *wretched.*
Cruel! you anſwer nothing!——look leſs *dreadful.*
e my diſtracted ſoul——and ſpeak ſome *comfort.*
um. O, Madam! quit that *poſture.*---My proud heart
ires to *keep* the glory you have lent it.
If I, indeed, was born to call you mother,
y do I ſee and hear you, *not* a *Queen?* [*Raiſes her.*
or think my ſoul too haughty:——no diſtreſs
olves *dejection:* 'tis the brave's *prerogative,*
feel, without *complaining.* Now!---*Strike,* tyrant---
rage, reſtrain'd from *act,* takes pride to *ſuffer.*
ol. [*To* Merope.] 'Tis well. I have, with juſt attention
heard;
, in impartial ſilence, weigh'd it, all.
ſorrow claims ſome right to call for mine:
his high *ſpirit* charms me.——I take him
[*Takes* Eumenes *by the hand.*
my heedful care; remit his ſentence;
, if found *yours,* adopt him as my ſon.
um. Yours, ſaid you?——*yours!*
ler. Be patient, good Eumenes.
ol. You rule his deſtiny. You know what price
e his life at. Smile; and meet my wiſhes.
may the Gods, conjointly, curſe my reign,
ſurvives refuſal of my pray'r!
ethink you. In an *hour,* I ſhall expect you;
ere, at the altar, to th' atteſting Powers,
may proclaim your *choice.* That moment makes him
victim, or my *ſon.* 'Till then, farewel.
ler. You cannot be ſo cruel.——Leave *him,* with me.
ſee him might perſuade me.
ol. See him, *there:*
him in Hymen's *temple.* Erox attend him. [*Exit* Pol.
um. Oh, Queen! oh, mother!
already, dare aſſume a right

To call you, by that dear, that aweful name:
Think, nothing, that may miſbecome *your* glory----
Do, nothing, that may mix contempt, with *mine*.
——I leave you to the care of Heav'n; and *die*.
Lead me to the tyrant.

SCENE III.

Merope, Euricles, Iſmene.

Mer. Fly, follow, Euricles; hold thy kind eye
Fix'd, to this tyrant's motions. Fain would I drear
He threatens, but to fright me.
Eur. Willing hope
So flatters, to deceive you. Too, too ſure,
His purpoſe! ev'n by nature, ſtern and bloody,
How *more*, when power and ſafety prompt his cruelt
[*Exit* Eu
Mer. Find thy good father, haſte, Iſmene; call hi
Tell him, diſtreſs grows headſtrong, and my ſoul
Sickens for want of counſel.
Iſm. [*Aſide.*] What a blindneſs
Is thirſt of human grandeur! Give me, Gods!
A cottage, and concealment. Save the Queen;
And, from the curſe of courts, remotely place me.
[*Exit* Iſ
Mer. [*Alone.*] No, there is none; no ruler of the ſt
Regardful of my miſeries. ———
Oh, my lov'd ſon! my eyes have loſt thee, *ever*.
I ſhall no more ſnatch comfort, from thy hopes,
Or wonder at thy ſweetneſs. ——
Why have the Deities permitted this?
Why have they *ſported* with a mortal's mind,
Unpitying its diſtraction? ſent him to me
From a far diſtant land? ſent him, for what!
To glut the murd'rer's *ſword*, who kill'd his father.
------Yet, you are *juſt*, ye Gods!—amazing darkneſs
Dwells o'er th' eternal will, and hides all *cauſe*.
I

nuſt not dare to tax Almighty Power,
or what I ſuffer from it. Let it but *pay* me
ith that curs'd tyrant's *puniſhment* attain'd:
et me but ſee myſelf depriv'd of him——
e him expell'd, from light, from earth, from name,
eep, as the chearleſs voids below can plunge him!
nd I will * kneel, a wretch, and *thank* your juſtice.

(* *Kneeling.*)

SCENE IV. Merope, Iſmene, Narbas.

Narb. Oh! Queen! Auguſt in woes! What *wrongs* are yours!
Mer. [*Riſing,*] Yes, Narbas,—I *have* ſacrific'd my ſon—
ave given him up, to death—have, madly, *own'd* him:
—What mother, who beheld her ſon, as I did,
om'd and endanger'd, *cou'd* have, then, kept ſilence!
Nar. Gen'rous your purpoſe! gloriouſly you err'd:
nd fell, but from a height, 'twas fame, to reach.
y up your tears, and ſummon all your ſoul:
me preſſes,—— and a moment, loſt, is fate.
[*Shouts heard.*
Iſm. [*Looking out.*] Uproar, and cries without, in riſing wildneſs,
ard from the city, reach the palace walls:
re ſign of new confuſion!
Narb. I ſaw the tyrant meet th' expecting *prieſts*;
tended, *not* in *hymeneal* robes,
t veſtments, ſuch as *ſacrifice* demands;
nd pomp of bloody rites, at dreadful *altars*.
o *theſe*, his hand conſign'd the victim, led:
nd deaf'ning ſhouts receiv'd him.——From the train
prieſtly horrors, *this way* mov'd their chiefs;
llow'd by loud, licentious, burſts of joy.
nid th' enormous ſwell of whoſe coarſe roar,
l, I diſtinctly heard was Poliphontes.
Mer.—Where are my *guards?* Arm'd, for my vengeance, call 'em. [*Enter three prieſts.*

SCENE V. Merope, Narbas, Iſmene, *Pr*

Mer. What! are ye here already?—Out of my ſ
Ye ſanctify'd *deceits!* You! whoſe bold arts
Rule rulers! and compel even *Kings*, to *awe!*
Be gone, fly, vaniſh———
Ye mouths of mercy! and ye hands of blood!
Chief Prieſt. Sorrows, and wrongs, claim privile
And Heaven's affronted *vot'ries* muſt *forgive.*
Mer. Cocl. in your cruelty!—Religion's veil
Ill cloaks rebellion's licence. *Death* was your erran
Why talk you of *forgiveneſs?*——'tis not yours.
Chief Prieſt. Not in *death's* cauſe we come; but Hea
——and love's
If *vows* were plighted, 'twixt the *King* and *you*,
No power on earth diſſolves 'em.
Mer. Falſe, as hell!
He knows, I heard his hated vows with horror.
—Slight inſolence!—To this ill-founded charge,
Silence, and ſcorn, ſhall anſwer. [*Turning*
Chief Prieſt. Gracious Sovereign!
Suſpend your anger: 'tis unjuſtly rais'd,
—Enlighten, and *command* us.——Found too *eaſy*
In one *wrong'd* faith, we twice, perhaps, have *err'd:*
Alike deceiv'd, in *both.*——Unbend that brow:
And deign to teach our doubt, what *name* to give
This ſtranger? this young captive to the King?
Mer. Give him the name you dare to miſapply.
Call him your *King*—my ſon—my loſt Eumenes.
Chief Prieſt. Hear *that*, prophetic ſoul! high Hea
——I tremble,
In dread, this great diſcovery comes too late.
The ſhouting people crowd the waiting altar:
And, erring in their zeal, *miſ-hail* the day.
—What *can* be, ſhall be try'd, to croſs his doom.
They ſhall be taught, with bold, advent'rous ſpeed,
To ſave their Sovereign's right—and, hence, raſh Qu

earn due repentance: and no more, let loose
he rage of wrongs, against the *tongues of Gods*. [*Exeunt Priests.*
Mer. —This solemn sharpness of deserv'd reproach,
ruck my too conscious guilt, with infelt awe!
ıave been warm too soon: and just, too late.
What, tho' religion's *guardians* taint her tide!
Pure is the *fountain*, tho' the stream flows wide:
Too oft, her *erring guides* her cause betray:
Yet, rage grows *impious*, when it *bars* her *way*.

ACT V.

SCENE I. *A Prison.*

Eumenes, Narbas, Euricles.

m. THINK, think upon your danger; fly, lov'd father!
y from the tyrant's power, and leave me to my fate.
Narb. All sense of my own danger lost, in yours,
ırew myself, regardless, at his feet.
ll of the fatal subject, I began,
ıcautious in my transport. Starting conscience
d from the face of truth. He shun'd to *hear*,
oke short, reply'd 'twas well: gave me permission;
y, full of seeming zeal, *injoin'd* my coming———
d me go pay my *last* short debt, of counsel:
ıd try to bend your heart, to meet his will.
Eur. He added, that his *Queen*—he call'd her *his!*
luſh to name her such: but so, he charg'd me.
ıce *she*, he said, in pity but for you,
elds a reluctant hand, to close with *his*,
is time, *her son*, whose life she holds so dear,
ds his own int'rest, and confirms *her* safety.
The rest, he paus'd and thought: but held it in,
own'd a disdainful nod —— and bad us *leave* him.

Eum. Slowly awaking, from my dream of wonders
I ſeem re-born, to ſome new world, unknown;
Where every thing, I meet with, ſhocks my ſoul.
---You talk of *dying*, whilſt I, yet, half doubt,
Whether, exiſting now, I really *live!*
If I am, truly, the loſt wretch I *ſeem*,
If in Mycene now inclos'd, I find
Queen Merope, my mother---King Creſphontes
My father, murder'd---his fear'd murd'rer crown'd,
With his ſtol'n diadem: and, in it, daring
Offer his widow'd Queen a *hand*, ſtain'd, frightful,
In her firſt *huſband's blood* —— All this, to *me!*
Seems, while I drink *in* Heaven's fair light, and vie
Yon manſion of the *Gods*, who govern man——
Incredible! aſtoniſhing!——and horrid!

Eur. 'Tis horrible, indeed! too dark for thought
—But, reaſon's line wants *depth* to ſound Heaven's

Narb. Deign, my *devoted* Prince! my King!—my
Suffer me, ſtill, to uſe that long-lov'd name ——
Deign but--to *live*.--Time, chance, and fortune's cha
May vindicate your glory.——Since the tyrant
Tempts, to *betray* ——reward him, with his *own*.
Deceive deceivers, and deceit grows *virtue*.

Eum. This, in thy foreſts, Elis! had I heard,
Even there, I ſhou'd have bluſh'd to hear, from Nar
But, as I am.——No more.——
Kind was your *motive!* —— pitying my *diſtreſs*,
You, but, forgot my *duty*.

Narb. Happy foreſts!
Wou'd, ye were ours, once more! there, peace
with us:
There, ſafety ſlept, upon unguarded hills,
And every tree's ſoft ſhadow *cover'd* anguiſh.

Eur. Soft! behold!——the tyrant *comes!*

SCENE II. Poliphontes, *to the foregoing.*

Pol. Retire: and wait, without.

[*Exeunt* Euricles, *and* Na

——And thou, raſh youth!
hoſe unexperienc'd years, and gen'rous plainneſs,
ll me with all the pity, due to weakneſs!
r the laſt time I come, to bring thee power.
ave to *my* toil, to ſmooth thy future paths;
nd root out faction's thorns, which trouble empire.
When I am *dead*—as age admits *ſhort* ſtay,
ou, and my Merope will reign, at eaſe,
nd thank my painful cares: and love my memory.
Why art thou dumb?---pauſe on---I read thee rightly.
ou haſt, I know, a kind of ſtubborn pride,
ll'd *courage* ——and miſtak'ſt it, for a *virtue*.
—*'Tis* virtue, when preſumption drives it not:
t ſuffers *thought* to guide it.
Eum. Guiding thought
as held me patient, long.——Now, anſwer *me*.
m I Mycene's *Monarch?*
Pol. For thy birth,
e it, as truth, or trick, or chance, conclude it.
, from ſome low, ſome nameleſs ſtock, deriv'd,
e humble, and adviſ'd——and riſe to greatneſs.
happier offſpring caſt thee for a *King*,
lake thyſelf *worthy*, of the crown I mean thee.
-'Tis but, to wait me to the marriage altar,
Where love, and Merope, and peace, attend.
There, to the Gods and me, (Mycene's *guardians*)
wear homage, and devote the faithful ſword.
That done, ſports, joys, and ſafety, crown thy youth:
And, in thy riper years, expect the diadem.
——Determine.——
Eum. 'Tis determin'd.
Pol. Tell me *how?*
Eum. Why am I left *unfree* to *chuſe*——yet, preſs'd
To tell thee my deciſion?——The *compell'd*
To *yield*, diſgrace conſent: and make faith doubtful.
——I am a *captive*. He, who holds not freedom,
Has not his will his *own*:——and chuſes *nothing*.
Pol. Fierce, amid miſery! thou, at once, art brave,

And

And insolent, and wretched !---but, beware,
Nor trust, too far, my pity of thy poorness.
I give thee, yet, some moments, to resolve.
I go, before thee : but, my guards attend,
To bring thee to the altar. Come, determin'd
To *swear*—and hope my crown, and live, my son ;
Or *die*, a slave unown'd, and lose thy *name*. [*Is g*
Eum. [*Calling after him.*] Thou *goest* then ?
Pol. [*Stopping.*] To *expect* thee.
Eum. I will *come.*
And *with* me, (tremble to be told it,) comes
The *God*, that rais'd *my* race to root out *tyrants.*
Soon shall the throne thou *stol'st* no more be thine :
Horror and penitence shall *pale* those *eyes*,
Whose daring insolence now *frown* on *virtue.*
Menace and insult, *then*, shall quit thy *voice*,
And groaning *anguish* grind it. ——— What the God
Restrain *my* hand from reaching, *happier* sons
Of my *immortal fire* shall rise, to execute :
And hurl thee from a *power*, that *hurts mankind.*
Pol. Here, Narbas ! Euricles !—You may return.
I leave him to your lessons. Too too deeply,
He feels their past impression. Teach him better :
Or your exacted *heads* shall answer to me,
For every well-known help I owe your hatred.
---Narbas ! thy age, I think, might best be trusted.
Experience lays his dangers open to thee.
Thou, as thou lov'st, advise him. ——— Whether bo
The son of Merope, or *thine*, no matter.
I must adopt him mine,---or *death* demands him.
[*Exit* Poliphon

SCENE III. Eumenes, Narbas, Euricles.

Eum. Where did this ill-instructed tyrant learn
To *threaten*, for persuasion !———I suspect,
He does not *seem* to doubt, but *doubts indeed*,
I share no blood of Hercules.——— He's gone :

A

And call'd me, to his altar.——Let us *follow.*
Narb. Stay.--Whither wou'd ſuch fatal raſhneſs lead you?
Eur. The Queen has friends, howe'er too weak, too few,
Who dare *defend* her cauſe. Give us but *time*
To weigh, and to reſolve, and theſe ſhall aid you.
Eum. No---In an hour ſo black, ſo dire, as this,
I taſk but my own heart, and *Heaven*, to aid me.
I *muſt* fall, I *will* ——I go——to *try*
What *God* forſakes the friendleſs.
[*Going out, meets* Merope.

SCENE IV. Merope, *and* Iſmene, *to them.*

Mer. Stay, my ſon——
Th' uſurper ſends me to thee,——Reſt, unheard,
His errand: but my own requires thy ear.
It has, perhaps. been told thee, that the *Woman*
Conquers the *Queen*,
——Let no light *credit* of a guilt ſo ſhameful
Inſult the daughter, mother, wife,----ah, me!
And *widow*——of a King.——Yet, I *muſt* go:
Muſt, at the altar, lend my trembling *hand*;
And *ſeem*——oh, Heaven!——
Eum. O, Madam!——ſo, to ſeem,
Were ſo to *be.* Can ſolemn vows, at altars,
Leave room for art's evaſions? See *me*, ſooner,
Tingeing the ſpotted ſtone with guſhing blood:
And my torn *breaſt* th' unſeeming ſacrifice.
Mer. So look'd, ſo ſpoke---ſo, ſometimes, frown'd, Creſphontes.
Full of thy godlike father, copy too,
The *confidence*, he lent me. *He* had ſcorn'd
To doubt me, for a moment, *leſs than* Merope.
Eum. If I was guilty,——think——
Mer. No more.——Time preſſes;——
Hear my reſolving will, and curb thy own.
Th' uſurper of thy throne no ſooner joins
My hand's ſuppos'd conſent, than, at the *altar*,

He

He *ſwears*—in all the pomp of *prieſtly witneſs*,
To free thee from thy chains—and, from that hour,
Confirm *ſucceſſion*, thine.——
Eum. Think, at what *price* comes empire, boug
Rather than ſee you wed this—— [
Mer. Raſh, again?———
Bound, by an oath, ſo witneſs'd, by the *Gods*,
And all Mycene's *prieſts*—and all her *peers* ——
He dares not *break* it: and thou liv'ſt, to reign.
—For me, who have, thenceforth, no call for life,
I ſeek thy *father*, in the glooms, below.
Eum. ——No more.
—It ſhall *not be.*——See! my repugnant ſoul
Shrinks from th' abhorr'd conception. The felt *God*
The GOD, glows, in me: ſwells, againſt controul:
And every ſpringy nerve is active *fire!*
Come on, friends! father! mother!---truſt my firmn
See, if I bear a heart, that brooks this wrong:
That poorly pants, for a baſe hour of *life*———
And let a *woman's* blood outdare a *King's*. [*Go*
Mer. Oh! ſtay: return—Call: ſtop him.
Eur. Sir!
Narb. Prince!
Mer. Son!
Eum. [*Returning.*] Look out: ſee yonder: view
father's *tomb*.
Know you his voice! are you a Queen?
Come liſten ——
I hear him---Hark!---my King, my father calls!
Mer. Methinks the God
He talk'd of, ſwells, indeed, his widening ſoul,
Lifts him above himſelf——above mankind.
Eum. Come--let me lead you to the altar's foot.
There hear, there, ſee---*there*, dwells th' Eternal's eye!
Mer. Ah! what is thy deſign!
Eum. To *die*——to *live*.
Friends!---in this warm embrace, *divide* my ſoul.
[*To* Narbas, *who preſſes him tend*
——W

—Weep not, my Narbas.
No bluſh, for deeds unworthy your inſtructions,
hall ſtain remembrance of the care, I coſt you.
tay thou, that this good Lord returning from me,
Iay find thee, and impart a ripening hope,
Vhereon your counſel may direct and ſave.
n to the work of fate---it calls me hence---
hear it, and obey. [*Ex.* Eum. Mer. *and* Eur.
Narb. Away---I wou'd not ſee *thee* ſhare my ſorrow.
Iſm. Oh! 'twere too *poor* a wiſh. Heaven knows, I ſeek
lo *ſhare*, — I long for *power*, to bear it, *all.*
Narb. Thou art too good, for courts—where *ruin* preys
n innocence; and nought but *guile* is ſafe.
—What are thy thoughts, of this loſt *Prince's* virtues?
Iſm. I am unſkill'd in men: and, moſt, in Kings.
ut, ſure! if ever beauty dwelt in form,
ourage in gentleneſs, or truth in grandeur,
ll thoſe adorn'd perfections meet, in *him.*
Nar. Yet, ſee! how Heaven, that *gave* him all theſe claims,
orgets 'em, and reſigns him.—Let that teach thee,
Vhen, ſoon, as ſoon they will, thy ſplendors *fall*,
hou loſeſt nothing, but a right to *woes.*
Iſm. Shou'd the Queen,
eſt, of her ſex!
eave this loud ſtage of pain,—and reſt in *death*,
h! teach my willing feet to find ſome gloom,
ark, as my proſpects, deep inclos'd, for ſafety;
nd ſilent, as the brow of midnight ſleep!
Narb. Yes, we *will* go, my *ſweet* Iſmene, go,
Where ſorrow's ſharpeſt eye ſhall fail to find us.
Where we may mix with men, who ne'er deceiv'd,
And women, born to *be*, the charms they look.
——There *is* a place, which my Eumenes lov'd,
Till youth's fond hope of glory daſh'd his peace;
Where nature, plainly noble, knows no *pomp*;
And virtue moves no *envy*: [*Shouts.*
——Hark! That cry
Bodes horror——'tis the ſignal of ſome fate.
—Liſten,

——Liſten, again——— [*Sh*

Iſm. Again I hear: and tremble.
Who knows, but, now, the Queen's too direful dee
Has ended all her mis'ries!———

Narb. No more theſe eyes ſhall find thee, fated K
Creſphontes, and his race, are, all, no more.

Iſm. [*At a window.*] Hence, from the temple, to
palace gate,
The ſcatt'ring crowd runs, wide, a thouſand ways:
All buſied, without view——All, driven, by terror

SCENE IV. Narbas, Iſmene, Eurieles, *blood*

Narb. Breathleſs and bleeding ſee! who comes!--
Eurieles!

Eur. Scarce had I ſtrength, wedg'd in by croſſing crow
To ſtem yon breathing torrent.———Give me reſt.

Narb. Eumenes?—does he *live?*

Eur. He is---the *ſon confeſs'd*---of *Grecian Gods!*

Narb. What has he ſuffer'd?

Eur. Nothing---but, has *done*---
Beyond example's boaſt.---Oh! ſuch a deed!
So terrible! ſo juſt! ſo fill'd with wonders!
That half Alcides' labours, ſcarce were more.

Narb. And ſhall he be a King?

Eur. He *is.*

Narb. And Merope?
Great mirror of affliction!---lives *ſhe*, too?
How was it?--ſay.--My joys will grow too ſtrong?

Eur. The altar, ſtrew'd with flow'rs, was ready dreſs
The ſmoking incenſe roſe, in fragrant curls,
And *Hymen's* lambent torches flam'd, ſerene;
Silence, and expectation's dreadful *ſtillneſs*,
Doubled the ſolemn horror of the ſcene!
---There, Poliphontes ſtood: and, at his ſide,
Dumb as a deſtin'd victim, ſtood the *Queen.*
Our Prince's ſummon'd hand had touch'd the altar;
His eye ſought Heaven---as if prepar'd to *ſwear.*

T

he tyrant ſmil'd :---when ſtrait, the prieſt look'd *pale*;
he lights extinguiſh'd —— and the temple's roof,
ook by deſcending thunder, ſeem'd to *bow!*
he *God!* the *God!* the reverend ſtarter cry'd,
rbids theſe baneful nuptials. ——Yes: I HEAR him,
he dreadful *Prince* reply'd: and, at that word,
eapt, from the altar, to the tyrant's breaſt
nd plung'd the ſacred *axe* of ſacrifice,
atch'd, like a lightning's flaſh! and reach'd his *life.*
He *fell*---and o'er him while with pendent eye
h' indignant hero hung, with arm new-rais'd,
aſe, from behind, pale Erox pierc'd his ſide.
Red, in his mingled blood, and riſing anger,
e heard the *crowd's protective cry*---turn'd ſhort,
nd buried in his brow the rapid ſteel.
hen, to the altar's height ſublimely ſprung,
ood, Monarch, all-confeſs'd; and *wav'd* the throng.
ome, let me guide you to this work of Heav'n.
aſte, and partake it---fly---

Narb. Oh! happy day--- [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *the Temple of* HYMEN.

umenes *diſcovered on the altar with the axe of ſacrifice in his hand.* Merope *kneeling. Prieſts, attendants and guards.* [*Trumpets and ſhouts heard.*

Mer. Now, now, ye Gods, my pray'rs are heard.
[*A loud clap of thunder.*

Eum. Hark! Madam, Heaven approves! th' attentive Gods
lear hearts, and make voice needleſs---Doubt not then
hey are the good minds guardians---my deliverance
roves how they lov'd your virtue: in your ſafety
feel their bleſſing perfect---may I live
n deeds, not words, to thank the good they gave.

Mer. Deeds, words, and thoughts are theirs----
leaven claims us all.

Eum. [*To the people.*] Hear me, my people, take your King, and with him,
leav'n's beſt gift, your liberty---Haughtier Monarchs

Place

Place greatneſs in oppreſſion: Let my throne
Find ſafety, but in ſaving——
Pride is too apt to harden proſp'rous pow'r,
But he, whoſe youth is chaſten'd by diſtreſs,
Makes ſubjects happy, and himſelf ador'd.

Enter Narbas, Euricles *and* Iſmene. *All ſpeaking, k*

Hail! and be ever bleſs'd, O King! O Queen!
Mer. Riſe—and lament no more, ye happy friend
Of virtue, and of Heaven!——See! what the Go
Have done—to ſhame ſuſpicion, into *faith!*
Oh! never let the innocent *deſpair:*
The hand, that *made*, can *ſave:* and beſt knows *w*
[*To* Eumenes.] ——Son of Alcides!——for, what
but *his*,
Nouriſh'd in miſery! by wants obſtructed!
Ere ſprung, like thine, at youth's firſt *ſhoot*, to glo
Trod on a tyrant, and redeem'd a *people?*
Eum. 'Tis but the low, the laſt, the lighteſt dut
Of a *King's* hand, to *dare*. 'Tis his, to ſave;
To think, to hear, to labour, to diſcern,
To form, to remedy,——to *be*——but *one:*
Yet, act, and love, and fear, and feel,——for *a*
—Oh, Madam! I am yours, midſt *all* theſe claims
Be thoſe my glory's, *this* my duty's care,
To add my royal *father's* love, to mine:
And, with a *doubled* rev'rence, ſeek your comfort.
—Narbas! what power can language lend my love,
To paint the joy, *thy* ſenſe of pleaſure gives me?
Thou ſource, and ſoul, and author, of my virtues:
Suſpend we thoughts, thus tender.---Let us, now,
Summon Mycene's *chiefs*, and calm her people. [*
[*To* Mer. Come, Madam! he who *reigns*, but clim
Tho' ſafe, his throne, he finds no *ſoftneſs*, there.
Dangers, and doubts, and toils, each moment ſeiz
Hang on his buſineſs, and perplex his eaſe.
Bright but by pomp of woe, Kings ſhine in vain
Envy'd for anguiſh, and adorn'd for pain.

T

THE

ROMAN REVENGE,

A

TRAGEDY.

Acted at the

THEATRE in BATH.

Perſons Repreſented.

M E N.

JULIUS CÆSAR, Dictator,	Mr. BROWN.
MARCUS BRUTUS, his Son by *Servilia*, but not knowing himſelf to be ſo,	Mr. CASTLE.
MARC ANTONY, Conſul of *Rome*,	Mr. FAULKNE
TORBILIUS, a *Roman*, favour'd by *Brutus*,	Mr. BROOKES.

Conſpirators againſt *Cæſar*,

CASSIUS,	Mr. FURNIVA
CIMBER,	Mr. RICHARD
DECIMUS,	Mr. KENNEDY
CASCA,	Mr. COX.
CINNA,	Mr. BLAKEY.
MARCELLUS,	Mr. MASON.
TRINOVANTIUS, a *Britiſh* Tribune, faithful to *Cæſar*,	Mr. STEPHENS
CURIO, a *Roman* Tribune, in his Confidence,	Mr. HILL.

An Augur, Officers, Lictors, and Plebeians.

CALPHURNIA, *Cæſar's* Wife,	Miſs KENNEDY
PORTIA, Wife to *Brutus*,	Miſs Low.
FLAVIA, a Lady, Attendant on *Calphurnia*,	Mrs. RICHARD

SCENE, the Capitol, and Places adjoinin

PROLOGUE.

TELL me, my matchleſs fair! Ye fearleſs brave!
Is there one Briton——*born to be a* ſlave?
No.—While your *Prince half* Europe's *right maintains,*
Nor ſouls, nor bodies, here, can ſtoop to chains.
Angels *and* Engliſhmen, *like Homage, pay:*
Low, but from love,——and, but by choice obey;
Loyal to reaſon's right, not ſlavery's awe,
The ſons of freedom ſerve the Kings of law.
Oft with no clogs on ſenſe, no clouds on art,
But let in truth's whole light, to chear the heart.
Such, once, was Rome, *to ſtrength, not luxury, train'd:*
When liberty was hers, and virtue reign'd.
Safe, in her own felt power, and bluntly brave,
She ſcorn'd alike to be—*or* make—*a ſlave.*
No puny Popeling, *yet, man's birth-right* ſtole:
One to th' invaded empire—of the SOUL!
Plain, prideleſs rule bound ſhort ambition's plea:
But left thought, art, faith, hope, and conſcience free.
Far other fame was hers, when Church-craft *reign'd,*
When, every Cherub's *face, with gall was ſtain'd:*
Sweet-ey'd Religion, ſour'd *by prieſtly leaven,*
Frown'd on pale Peace—and ſhook her keys *at Heaven.*
More than her Maker's rights, ſhe found too ſmall,
And murmur'd, that his grants could give—but ALL.
Wild, inconſiſtent, blaſphemous, and vain,
Revers'd God's laws—to propagate his reign!
Her creeds taught curſes—her proud ſchools debate,
Nothing, but fool, and flattery, 'ſcap'd her hate.
She lov'd *obedience,—but ſhe lov'd it,* blind,
And, ſafelier to ſubdue, debas'd *mankind.*
No pardon there, let Britain's *ſins preſume;*
Freedom, and truth, are HERETICS—*at* Rome.
Religion's darkneſs will no reverence feel
For faith, that bears no craft; and blinds no zeal:
Learning uncurb'd by cant; truth, waſh'd from wiles,
In earth, that reaſons——and a heav'n, that ſmiles:
Homage, that no ſedition can betray,
Yet liberty, that laughs at lawleſs ſway.
Such had the world's vain miſtreſs, then, been fram'd,
When this night's ſtory Rome's *attention claim'd;*
Freedom had nurs'd no ſon, to blaſt her reign,
And Cæſar had a ſoul, without one ſtain.

EPILOGUE

Written by a LADY.

WELL, Sirs, you have heard our Cæsar's *mournful ending*
Learn hence, that power's *a thing, not worth contending.*
As for my part, it is my firm opinion,
That matrimony, *is enough* dominion!
For, when men's heads are turn'd upon ambition,
The humble wives, are in a fine condition!
Then, I am angry with our author's story:
Not, that it either favours whig, *or* tory.
What have we petticoats *to do with* nations?
'Twere well would women keep their proper stations.
No.——*I've a weightier reason far, to hate it;*
And yet, methinks,——*I should not here relate it.*
You, Gentlemen, are apt enough to blame *us,*
Because perhaps,——*not every one, can* tame *us.*
Now woman, *ever famous for a* secret!
May ne'er henceforth be trusted, to——repeat it.
Since, from these wives, *desiring to be* knowing,
Their husband's sad catastrophe *was owing.*
Cæsar *would not regard his wiser* wife;
And for that fault, you see, he lost his life.
So obstinate are men, their will pursuing,
One way, or t'other, they complete our ruin!
Now, if your sex had not been form'd to teize *us,*
They'd only persevere, *in what should* please *us;*
And learn to know, that we, *awake or* dreaming,
Have understandings——*worth a man's* esteeming.
Well, maidens, if ye ever chuse to marry,
(*Tho' some have* chose,—*and yet,—been forc'd to* tarry,)
Give no Predestinarian *your affection,*
If ye expect observance *or* protection.
They'll lead your lively hopes a tedious dance,
When no one blessing *is to come by* chance:
They'll rob your judgment, *of all claim to* merit;
And unreciprocally break your spirit.
But if implicit, *any thing* must be,
Prefer in only love, *the* devotee.
Such, shall alone prove worthy of those charms,
Who think, no conquest nobler, *than your* arms.

[Pointing to the bo

T

THE ROMAN REVENGE.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A hall in Cæſar's *houſe.* Caſſius, Torbilius, [*Croſſing.*]

Caſ. STay! *turn!*--Th' imperfect dawn deceives my ſight,
Or 'tis Torbilius.
Tor. Caſſius!
Caſ. He! ——how comes it,
I meet thee, in the houſe of hated Cæſar!
Tor. Portia, to-night, was frighted, in a dream;
And, haſt'ning hither, to alarm Calphurnia,
Call'd for my hand, to guide her.
Caſ. In the *Forum,*
Expect ſtrong claſh, this morning.
Tor. Will Cæſar, *then,*
Be *King?*
Caſ. He will—yet, dreams of a to-morrow,
Tor. So dies our plot abortive.
Caſ. Rather, die Cæſar!
Fix Brutus ours—and yon pale—riſing ſun
Shall drink the tyrant's blood, before its ſetting.
Tor. Speak ſoftly.—'Tis an unſafe ſcene, for treaſon.
Caſ. Not now—the houſe is *deſart.*—Every eye,
Buſied remote, ſtrays upward, from the grove;
Hard, thro' dim dawn, the patient *augurs* pore,
Watchful to teach myſterious birds, to *lie,*
And mock inſulted Heaven, to flatter Cæſar.
Tor. Wait *you* the *auguries?*
Caſ. Away——light queſtioner!

Brutus, and I, with more tame *ſlaves*, call'd *Senators*,
Laſt night beſeeching audience, *kingly* Cæſar
Told us, fair meanings ſhun'd the ſhade of night,
And bad us, when day roſe, attend his pleaſure.
I came a willing hour too ſoon—for, oh!
Such a diſcovery!—ſuch intelligence!
Tor. Whence flows it?
Caſ. Whence do all court ſecrets flow?
Kings *truſt* their minions—and King-blaſters *bribe* 'e
Cæſar, to-night, ſat writing, till, alarm'd,
He heard Calphurnia ſhriek, and riſing to aid her,
Left, in his cloſet, a half tranſcrib'd,
And ſtrangely---purpos'd WILL:---wherein *who* (thi
thou)
But Brutus---our laſt hope---*Rome's* free-born Brutus
Is nam'd the tyrant's SON! and heir of empire!
Tor. In form of *will adopted?*
Caſ. Direly; adopted!
Own'd his true natural born decendant ſon,
By Cato's ſolemn ſiſter!---Curſe her hypocriſy!
'Twas ruin---to the hopes of Rome, and liberty.
Tor. What bribe had power, to force a friend from Cæ
Caſ. Thy friend, and mine--imperial *gold!*--more eloqu
Than ten ſmooth Cæſars! bought a true *King-ſerver*
From his Lord's boſom. —— Opportunely near,
He caught th' inviting moment:---left his covert,---
Read---ſtarted---ſent to preſs my early coming,
And, private here, in the ſtill duſk, diſcloſed it.
Tor. Gods! what perfidious friendſhips cheat manki
Caſ. Laugh and be wiſe.—So, to betray, gives *great*
---Forget not thou, mean-while, to ſpeed thy charge:
Prepare cold Brutus for the day's impreſſion:
Swell him, with all his prais'd forefathers' pride;
Fume his enha ing ſoul with flattery's incenſe,
And ſhare divided Rome's beſt hopes, with Caſſius.
Tor. Why muſt Rome's hopes depend on *one* man's a
Caſ. All men are ours in Brutus.---Thou, and I,
And every Roman, leagu'd, to cut off Cæſar,

H

late Cæſar.---Every burning breaſt, but his,
Has ſeparate, infelt, private cauſe, for *malice*;
Who will believe, we ſtrike for Rome.---So known,
So mark'd, malignant to the name of Cæſar!
Brutus is Cæſar's *idol!*---and loves Cæſar!
His aid will conſecrate revenge to virtue.
He can, when Cæſar bleeds, turn tears to triumph,
And blot the whiteſt ſtar, that lights his character.
Tor. But this is baſeneſs, Caſſius!---Grant it needful,
The *man* ſhou'd die---why muſt we kill his *virtues?*
Why, to oppoſe his reigning, muſt we rob
His natural rights?---why ſhade the ſoul, he ſhines by?
No---let us own the beauties of his *heart:*
Weeping, confeſs his bravery, temp'rance, pity,
Long patient courtings of rejected peace---
Yet---dreadful darings in contempt of danger:
Elſe, we ſhall ſpot *law's* face, with marks of *envy*,
Treating this vaſtneſs of a mind, like Heaven's,
As if keen-ey'd for guilt, but blind to goodneſs.
Caſ. Periſh his goodneſs!---grind my ear no more
With his curſt *qualities*---I hate his *power:*
I hate myſelf---hate Rome---hate life, joy, victory,
Hate every hope, but one---to make *him* feel,
That ſlighted Caſſius drew down fate on Cæſar.
This let me live to teach him---*then*,---tho' Rome,
Sunk, round me, till her tumbling Capitol
Smoak'd, for my funeral pile,---'twere death with *glory*.
Tor. Caſſius! *my* ſoul, leſs fiery, cannot ſtrain
Reſentment into frenzy.---In my ſenſe,
Reaſon, not rage, ſhou'd meaſure plotters' paſſions.
Be temperate, or ---
Caſ. [*Haſtily.*] By Heav'n! he comes! yon gallery
Sounds, with his ſtep.---The holy farce is ended.
Poet,---farewel. --- [*Exit* Caſſius.
Tor. [*Alone.*] Farwel, deteſted envy!
Motives like thine, turn juſtice into murder.
Something ſhall, ſtrait, be done.---Cæſar be ſafe:
He, who forgave my guilt, demands my virtue. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. Cæsar, *preceded by lictors, and officers, followed at some distance by an* Augur.

Aug. Cæsar! imperial Cæsar! hear the *Gods.*
Cæsar. Go: thou art known---The Gods, thou serv'st
senators:
Cassius, thy Phœbus---and his gold, thy Jove.
Aug. Rest, from this fatal *March*, restrain'd by Hea
And, by such unpropitious auguries, warn'd.
Cæsar. Shame on your *pious frauds!* they tire indulge
Aug. Check not the voice of truth: 'twas form'd
plainness.
Cæsar. Own it with conscious shame.---If truth l
plainness,
Why are the Gods' clear wills perplex'd, by art?
Aug. Speaks Rome's high *Pontiff* this?
Cæsar. He does, bold Augur!
To rescue zeal, from pride's unhallow'd claim;
That *robs*, to rev'rence Heaven.
Aug. Heaven calls for faith.
Cæsar. How dare you, then, make infidels, by falseho
Wou'd you, o'er reason, stretch the chain of faith,
Gild it with Heaven's broad light: touch the taught *he*
Nobly, speak out:---and tell th' attracted world,
Nothing is from the Gods, that shakes man's honesty.
Aug. Oh! stay thy fatal *March*---change thy rash vie
Bid thy rais'd eagles fall th' expanded wing;
Air's plumy people, screaming from the left,
Stoop in their flight to warn thee:---omens on omens,
Bode unauspicious doom---and teem, with death.
Cæsar. No more.
Aug. The Gods! ——
Cæsar. Away---I know 'em, best,
Who know 'em friends to virtue.——
Aug. Virtue is *liberty.*
The foes of freedom can attract no *Gods*,
To prop their falling standards.---Heaven begloom
Thy star, with some dire fate: but *what* is darkness?

Cæſar. Go: ſearch it, in the *air*,--and, if thou find'ſt it,
rm'd, in its ugliest menace, bring it hither.——
Vhen ſcreams of birds can ſhake a ſoldier's heart,
ou ſhalt lead *prieſts* to fight, for feeble Rome,
nd lend their *arts*, to Cæſar.
Aug. Tremble——
Cæſar. Away. [*Exit* Augur.

SCENE III. Cæſar [*Alone.*]

Cæſar. I *wou'd* be *happy*.---*Why*, then, am I *great*?
len, who deſert their peace, to ſerve their glory,
il, for the *malice* of oblig'd mankind:
et---weigh, warm heart, impartially ſincere,
Vhence oppoſition ſprings---and love its boldneſs.
Vhy claim I power ſupreme?---Was empire---mine?
reedom is every Roman's native right;
nd every Roman voice demands it back.
Vhere power's, unjuſtly, held---the *oppoſer's* juſt:
ut---where even freedom is, by choice, *corrupt*,
low fruitleſs---to redeem the *willing* ſlave!
an I recall the *dead*?---Rome gives up Rome;
he cheapen'd varlets rate their venal votes,
nd ſell their ſoul's redeemer.---Sleep, ambition!
low eaſier 'tis to *ſave*, than *mend*, a people!
all, ſervile Rome!---No---Rome is Cæſar's country.
nd, who dares *injure*, where he's born---to *ſave*?
oes! wrong me on---till pardon'd into friends:
uſy, for greatneſs, I'll neglect revenge:
'ake envy in reward, and make it fame.
Vhat new, kind fear, alarms thy Lady's love?
[*Enter* Flavia *frighted.*
Flav. Danger, moſt inſtant, ſhe wou'd, now, impart,
re Caſſius, and his proud confederates come---
'hoſe enemies of all her hopes---and Cæſar!
Cæſar. Go: tell her, Cæſar dreads no enemies,
ut thoſe, *her* felt afflictions teach to wound him.
[*Exit* Flavia.

Cæſar.

Cæſar. [*Kneeling.*] Hear me, *thou!* ſelf-producing, dark, firſt cauſe!
All-ruling! all-pervading! aweful Power,
Whom, under various names, blind worſhip ſeeks!
If, till compell'd, I drew the public ſword,
Sheath'd, in my boſom, let me guilty fall! [*Riſes.*
But if brib'd hopes, or partial ſenſe of liberty,
Sovereign'd a *ſenate*, o'er a nation *ſlaves:*
Then, tyranny (aſſum'd, to bar a tyrant)
Gave Rome five hundred Kings---left one ſhou'd reign.
If I *muſt* war---be edg'd my ſword, for glory:
Better to *hold*, than *bear* tyrannic ſway:
Where *but the great* are free---reaſon's a ſlave.

SCENE IV. Calphurnia, *to* Cæſar [*entering haſtily.*]

Cal. Cæſar! my life!---my love!
Cæſar. My ſoul's ſoft care!
Thou trembleſt!---ſome new viſion has alarm'd thee.
Cal. Heaven is alarm'd ——for virtue ſleeps, in danger.
Cæſar. Reſt, from thy dreams, by *day*---thou dear intruder!
Fears, and affections, are for happier hours:
War, and our country's cares, demand us, now.
Cal. Can you be deaf to warnings, from the *Gods?*
Portia came, trembling, from a dreadful dream,
That proves mine ominous.
Cæſar. What has ſhe dreamt?
Cal. Frighted, ſhe ſaw her father's entering ſhadow
Glide thro' her chamber, in a duſky ray:
Stopping, it fix'd a pale, and empty eye,
Spoke, in a thin, faint, death-denoting voice,
And pierc'd her to the ſoul.---*Portia, thou'rt mine,*
Th' unbodied phantom cry'd.—— *Brutus no more*
Thy Lord---nor Cæſar Rome's. ——It ſaid, and paſs'd,
And melted into air, and flow'd away.
Cæſar. The night-born tremblings of a timid love,
Unſtedfaſted by reaſon!
Cal. Be it no more!

Yet,

Yet, ſee not theſe dire men.——They find, and dread
Their power's deſtruction in the crown of Cæſar.
Hence, have their plotting fears, this day, combin'd,
To blaſt thy purpoſe---or, cut ſhort thy life.
[*Soft knocking at the door.*
Cæſar. Go, with thy medling tenderneſs.---They come;
Anon, thou ſhalt be heard.
Cal. ——One word indulge me:
Ere to the people's public voice propos'd,
Plebeian votes permit this crown to Cæſar,
Hear a ſad ſecret, my touch'd heart wou'd tell thee.
Cæſar. Give thyſelf peace. ——I *will.*
Cal. May all Rome's Gods,
In pity of her fate, defend, and bleſs thee!
[*Exit* Calphurnia, *meeting* Antony, *who bows to her in paſſing.*

SCENE V. Cæſar, Marc Antony.

Ant. Health, and a length of happy days to Cæſar!
Freedom and faction join to crown him King.
Cæſar. Who wou'd be King of faction, Antony?
Monarchs, by freedom crown'd, reign Kings, indeed!
Ant. Why checks that boding ſigh, the public joy?
What is there, in the courſe of worldly dread,
That thy great heart can ſigh for?
Cæſar. ——For a *friend.*
Ant. No friend to Cæſar needs a ſigh, in Rome.
Cæſar. Oh, Antony!---who wou'd not ſigh, in Rome,
That thinks of her loſt virtues?
Ant. ——If there lives
One, who not hates oppreſſion, let him love
Rome, and her virtues.---Both grown falſe, and hateful.
Cæſar. Hate not the guilty, but the guilt, my Antony:
Ne'er ſhall thy ſoul expand in public love,
Till it can can bear, and pardon, private wrongs.
Ant. When ſlander ſtings us, what ſhou'd ſufferers do?
Cæſar. Invulnerably faultleſs, ſhame detraction.——
Why

Why ſhou'd th' ungrounded ſlanders of th' unjuſt,
Provoke us to *deſerve* 'em? — Late, when here
We met, I told thee, Cæſar had a *ſon*.
Ant. If I forſake thy race—
Cæſar. — Swear nothing, Antony.
Exacting oaths, I muſt ſuſpect deceit:
And he, who truſts the doubted, cheats *himſelf*.
Ant. But who?---what ſtar of Rome is Cæſar's---*ſon*
Cæſar. Suppoſe it Brutus.
Ant. [*Starting.*] — Every God renounce him!
Cæſar. What God renounces excellence in man?
Ant. Brutus is hard, and ſtern:---and, what *is* man,
Who cannot *weep* for man---and *feel*, for nature?
Cæſar. Servilia was, in ſecret, vow'd my wife,
When Cato, whoſe auſtere, and captious virtue
Repell'd even *virtue* — if it croſs'd his own,
Jealous of our affiance, — yet, undreaming,
How far one ſoft, ſtol'n, amorous hour had borne us,
Snatch'd the ſucceeding day, and, in my abſence,
Forc'd her, diſtracted, to a Brutus' arms.
Ant. What mean the wanton Powers who licenſe chance
To ſhame thee, with a ſon, unlike, as Brutus!
Sedition, will not hear, the call of blood;
Intractably moroſe, it ſhuts out pity,
And ſtarves humanity, to cheriſh pride.
Cæſar. Time, that transforms us all, ſhall win back Brutus.
Ant. Time's conqueror might reclaim him.
Cæſar. *Who's* that?
Ant. *Death.*
Cæſar. How!—to *whom* ſpeak'ſt thou this?
Ant. ——To man.
Cæſar. *Be* one.
And, when thou ſpeak'ſt again——ſpeak, to the *father*.
Ant. If I offended——Cæſar can be partial.
Cæſar. No.---For I ſee, thee honeſt, through thy error.
Ant. I thought, revenge of wrongs was right of nature.
Cæſar. Men think but to the limits of their minds.
For me——deſpiſing wrongs, I ſhun ſeverity.

Ant.

Ant. Yet, ſure! all envied greatneſs, wou'd be *ſafe.*
Cæſar. Greatneſs is ſafeſt, when it dares *forgive.*
Ant. Rome hates your power.
Cæſar. Then, ſhe ſhall love my *mercy.*
Ant I can but wiſh thee bleſs'd:---and, ſtill, ſerve on.
Cæſar. Come, thou ſhalt *aid* me.--Thou haſt lent thy arm
To conquer nations for me:---conquer Brutus:
Teach him, that nobleſt courage ſhuns to hate:
Charm him, to taſte the power of *gentle* ſway;
New humanize his heart, to *thy* ſoft model,
And graft politeneſs on his ſavage virtue.
Ant. When Cæſar bids—— his Antony *obeys:*
Had Brutus been *my* ſon--I, too, had hop'd.

Enter Curio.

Cur. Cæſar!——the expected Lords——
Cæſar. Admit 'em, Curio. [*Exit* Curio.

SCENE VI. Cæſar, *ſeated:* Antony, Brutus, Caſſius, Cimber, Decimus, Caſca, Cinna, Marcellus, *advancing to their ſeats.*

Cæſar. Health to the jealous for their country's freedom;
Cæſar's diſtruſters, welcome!---Cimber! Decimus!
Marcellus! Caſca! Caſſius! Brutus!——*all!*
This day, the ſenate ſits: quick, therefore, teach me
The previous purpoſe of your offer'd zeal.
Brut. Rome dreads to loſe her Cæſar, in a King.
Cæſar. What wou'd you do with this fam'd *Sybil's prophecy?*
How check the public *terror?*——Muſt I march
With trembling legions, unſuſtain'd at heart,
And deſperate, from defect of, but a *name?*
By oracles fore-doom'd for Parthia's fall?
Caſſius, you *ſmile*:---The *great* ſhould judge the great:
For, never mean man's thoughts out-ſtretch'd his *feeling:*
Speak, Brutus---were *your choice* your General's leader,
What wou'd you wiſh him *call'd?*

Brutus.

Brut. Rome call'd him—*Conſul.*
Cæſ. Rome did ſo—but, when ſuperſtitious dread
Of hoſtile arms has damp'd a nation's fire,
Changes, which tend to raiſe dejected hope,
Are *wiſdom.*
Brut. Wiſdom has its *fears.*—
Cæſar. —Speak boldly.
Attentive, even from *foes*, to borrow benefit,
I court ſuſpicion's gall, to aid my judgment,
With all th' inſtructive doubts of men, who *hate* me.
Brut. No foe has Cæſar—but his *crown* has many.
Ant. King, was a title, aweful, ancient, ſacred.
Cimb. [*Riſing.*] Plain truth is a blunt talker—Never, raſh Conſul.
Never did Sylla, Marius, Pompey,—never,
In all the boldneſs of uſurp'd command,
Dare the ſhun'd *name*—howe'er they graſp'd the *power:*
Nor challenge kingly ſtyle, in free-born Rome.
But liberty, perhaps, becomes too bold.
Cæſar. True liberty is bold, without preſumption;
And, without flattery, gentle.—Caſſius, be heard.
Caſ. [*Riſing.*] Cæſar has *ſworn*, to guard our ancient rights;
Sworn, to uphold ſolely ſupreme—the *law*:
Cæſar unperjur'd, Rome can fear no *King.*
Cæſar. Malice, diſguis'd in counſel,—keep it, Caſſius:
Permitted ſlander is a *willing tax*,
That patient power pays, to the rights of liberty.
Dec. [*Riſing.*] Be Cæſar King—but, ſtill, let Rome be free.
Cæſar. A plain man's honeſt prayer—Brutus, why dumb?
Brut. [*Riſing mournfully.*] I muſt be dumb, if neutral:
—but, compell'd
To *ſpeak*, diſdain to ſpeak, unlike a Roman:
What helps it to Rome's friends, if Rome wears fetters,
That foes, in Aſia, join, to drag her chain?
Leave Parthia ſafely fierce:—Dangers remote
Touch but our *fears*—Domeſtic ones are *felt.*
Cæſar. Brutus! thou err'ſt, undreaming it.—*Thou*, Caſſius, Art,

Art, knowingly, an unmiſled miſleader:
Thy paſſions fram'd the pile:—Good Decimus,
Marcellus, Cimber, and ſuch *live materials*,
Buttreſs thy factious building:—'Tis in vain,
To reaſon with the *partial:* Men, who call
Their own corrected pride, the public danger;
Elſe, I wou'd ſay, to minds, that could reflect,
Be freemen *among* freemen.—Hard controul
Breaks a wrong'd people's ſpirits into ſlaves,
Or, ſpurs 'em into rebels—'Tis diſhoneſt:
What right have we to freedom, not alike
The property, ev'n of the *pooreſt* Roman?

Brut. When fed the lab'ring *ox*, abreaſt the *lion?*

Cæſar. How venal is all Rome!—Her every *Senator*
Sold, to his paſſions' biddings!—Brutus is ſold
To pride:—to avarice, ſome:—theſe *envy* draw;
Thoſe *fears*;—in others, hopes of promis'd power
Warp the dependent will, to crooked reaſonings;
Looſe, as the bribes, that bought 'em.

Caſ. —*Voices*, Cæſar!

Are, ſometimes, ſold—where *hands* retain their liberty.

Cæſar. True--angry Caſſius!--But, the *head*, miſguiding,
Hands will miſtake the mark, and wound *themſelves.*
How ſoon have you forgot Pharſalia's field?

Caſ. Fortune decided, *there*:---At Rome, 'tis *law*—

Cæſar. Fortune decided ſtrangely, Caius Caſſius!
If I, by having conquer'd, muſt *obey*,
And you, from being beaten, claim *command!*

Ant. [*Riſing with emotion.*] After ſuch fierce, unveil'd, preſumptuous menace,
Rome muſt forget, *for ever*, to obey;
Or Cæſar, *once*, to pardon.

Cæſar. [*To* Caſſius.] —Caſſius, it grieves me,
That thou compell'ſt a ſentence, too ſevere; [*Riſes.*
Since mercy ſerves but to excite offence,
And bounty ſpurs ingratitude---Be--*ſafe*:---
Sunk, to the ſhelter of a wrong'd man's *pity*,
Too feeble to provoke.---Eſcape revenge. [*Comes forward.*

Brut. [*Holding him.*] Call it no crime, to apprehend
If liberty offends, and truth grows treason, [distress!
Thank Heaven, the moſt dejected ſlave, on earth,
Holds privilege to *die*.--But Cæſar frowns!
Note it, attentive Gods! and wake, for freedom!
Imperial Cæſar *frowns!*--Rome's maſter frowns---
That oppoſition ſpeaks uncourtly truth. [*Turning to go.*
Cæſar. No more.--The reſt, when in full *ſenate* met:--
Till then farewel.--- [*Exeunt Senators.*
---Stay, Conſul,---Brutus--*ſtay.*

SCENE VII. Cæſar, Brutus, Antony.

Cæſar. [*After a long look, fix'd earneſtly upon* Brutus.]

Maxims, inhuman, fierce, and blind, like thine,
Diſgrace a freeman's name. [Brutus *turns to go.*
----Stay, I command thee;
Return, raſh man---and know---'tis Cæſar calls.
Brut. [*Returning.*] All my adhering heart feels Cæſar,
Leave but Rome's Senate free, devoted Brutus [*King,*
Shall reſt thy willing ſlave.---
Cæſar. Proud, as thou art
Of liberty, thou haſt not learnt, that freedom,
Beyond all yokes, hates, moſt, this yoke of *prejudice*,
That makes men ſlaves, at *ſoul*.---THINK freely, Brutus,
And let us argue, like unbiaſs'd Romans:
Thou talk'ſt of rights--Rome's rights:--are not the People
The aſſembled People, ROME? Is not law *theirs?*
Counſel, that, not complied with, would *compel*,
Turns law to *tyranny*.
Brut. Shall *tumult* reign?
Shall high born *Senates ſerve*, and groundlings *govern?*
Cæſar. No.---Mark the *Senate*'s bounds--and mark the People's:
Foreſight, and guardian care, and weigh'd advice,
Debated means, and remedies propos'd,
Theſe, and theſe *only*, are the SENATE's rights:

Pro-

Propounded laws accepted, or refus'd,
This is the PEOPLE's claim : and *both* are Rome. [*ſtill.*
Brut. Thanks to the Gods, Rome boaſts ſome patriots
Cæſar. Yes--graſping hopes undue, and check'd of aim,
Patriots, in aid of vengeance ! they combine,
To *clog* the wheels, they can no longer guide :
Hiding low--ſelf, behind the public cauſe,
They murmur, till they purchaſe private eaſe,
Then licenſe general pain, to curſe mankind.
Brut. Held not the *Senate* ſcale moſt weight, in Rome?
Cæſar. Rome felt it, Brutus--till my arms reliev'd her.
Brut. He, who, by arms, rules freemen, teaches *ſlaves*--
By arms, to rule that ruler.
Cæſar. Truſt a try'd ſword.
Brut. Curſe its bold uſe--in any hand, but Cæſar's,
When, to the vulgar herd, it levels nobles,
Born, to be great---and mixes hinds with *Conſuls.*
Cæſar. *Born* did'ſt thou ſay !---mark, how thy partial pride,
Barring the gates of hope, wou'd ſhut out merit !
No man was ever *born*, but *form'd* to greatneſs :
Who, but aſpiring--hinds--were--Rome's firſt fathers?
Unvulgar ſpirit rais'd their deeds to fame,
And, thence, unvulgar *reverence* mark'd 'em *noble.*
---But, in our hands, diminiſh'd honour ſhrinks
To bare *degree*,---and ſhames the rights of *rank.*
Heaven !---what a difference 'twixt *old Rome*, and *ours?*
Our firſt fam'd anceſtors *gave* worth--to blood :--
We, from a worthleſs *birth*, wou'd *ſteal* diſtinction.
Penſions, with us, take place :--with them, 'twas virtue.
Our av'rice plunders friends : their conquering bounty
Took nothing, ev'n from foes---but power of inſult.
Brut. Grant us leſs worthy ; ſtill their claims are ours :
And ſons, who baſely quit their fathers' rights,
Deſerve to live like ſlaves---or die, like traitors.
Cæſar. Fie!--let us bluſh, to name our fathers' rights'
Who leave their claim to honeſty, *forgot !*
Brut. Oft, in ſunk ſtates, when power preſumes, on *vice*,
New crimes call out new *virtues.*

Cæſar. Rome's new virtues
Match her new maxims : mark their grandeur, Brutus,
Active, in others' induſtry, we build,--- [glory :
Race, game, dreſs, dance, feaſt, and drink deep, for
Ours are the *taſtes* of life : Let *humbler ſtates*
Learn its lean *duties* :---we, to lighten joy,
Have, elegantly painleſs ! caſt off care :--
Hunger, and thirſt, and looſe deſires---anticipate :
Poſtponing nothing--but thought, fame, and juſtice.
Vallies we teach to riſe : o'er levell'd hills
Stretch the tir'd ſight :--but, inward turn no eye :
Ourſelves the darkeſt part of our own proſpect.
Well ſay they, Rome is chang'd.---*'Tis* chang'd, indeed!
Women are chang'd to men,---and men to women.
Anger has chang'd its mark :---Romans ſhock Romans,
Yet, tame to Parthian inſults, hold back vengeance,
The robbers may have reſt---and bribery leiſure.
Ant. To ſons of faction, ſcreen'd but by Rome's *crimes*,
Why name we Roman *virtues ?*
Brut. ---On *thy* voice
Dwells eloquence, that makes ev'n error charming,
O, too perſuaſive Cæſar !---But thou, Antony,
Shalt know, that, when fall'n Rome's degenerate *Conſuls*
Live,---a King's ſlaves,---Brutus ſhall die---a Roman.
[*Exit.*

SCENE VIII. Cæſar, Antony.

Ant. [*After a pauſe.*] *Now*, Cæſar ! what deſerve ſuch Romans ?
Cæſ. [*After a* ſhort *pauſe.*] ---Freedom.
Ant. They are *too free*, who treat their *friends* with inſult,
Cæſar. If man were plac'd above the reach of inſult,
To pardon, were no virtue :--Think, warm Antony,
What mercy *is*---'Tis daring to be wrong'd,
Yet, unprovok'd by pride, perſiſt in pity.
Ant. Power, that endures contempt, *invites* rebellion.

Cæſar.

Cæſar. Dream not that moderation weakens power:
The heart-felt Sovereign ſmiles at faction's rage;
And thoſe malignant men, who hate unjuſtly,
We puniſh moſt, when we are moſt belov'd.

Ant. What Prince, who was not *fear'd*, was, ever, ſafe?

Cæſar. Only, in war, he ſhould be *fear'd*.---In peace,
Be *honour'd*, Antony.

Ant. Even ſelf-defence requires, at leaſt, that bloody
Caſſius fall.

Cæſar. Why ſhou'd I ſtrike the *weak*, who cannot
wound me?

Ant. Puniſh the guilty *will*, that dar'd *imagine*.

Cæſar. So *minions* teach *tame* Kings, to merit *hate*.

Ant. Where Kings ſuſpect,---*preventing*, they ſecure.

Cæſar. Scorn to *ſuſpect*, where thou wouldſt ſcorn to *fear*.
Nor waſte, on ev'ry ſlight and weak offence,
The *dignity* of vengeance.---I will, anon,
Truſt Brutus with his birth: nature muſt move him.
If not---I leave him to the Gods, and time.

Ant. Shall he *oppoſe*, yet, *wear* his father's crown?

Cæſar. Shou'd life allot me hope, to ſtretch Rome's ſoul
To latitude for liberty---'twere more
Than empire, to reſtore her.---If the taſk,
Hard, and extenſive, calls for lengthening years,
While, in untimely hour, I, diſtant, die,
Brutus, by this laſt light, will judge my purpoſe.
[*Gives a paper.*

Ant. Long may the Gods, preſerving Cæſar's life,
Protect his purpoſes, from care, not Cæſar's.

Cæſar. Life has too ſhort a reach, for long deſigns:
And, oft, the fruit not ripe, the tree declines:
No help unneedful, man ſhou'd *all* purſue,
Leſt time ſlide from him,---and his hopes die, too.

ACT II.

SCENE I. *A room in* Cæsar's *house. Two chairs plac'd.* Calphurnia, Flavia.

Cal. GO, Flavia;--spread enquiry through the palace:
While I, prolonging time, by every art
Of apprehensive love, hold Cæsar, fix'd
In conference, till slow Torbilius comes:
Fittest reporter of his own sad tale,
To force belief, and fire reluctant vengeance. [Cæsar?
Cæsar. [*Without.*] Where is the bosom counsellor of
Cal. Fly—find Torbilius:—when he comes, touch soft
My silver bell, that the known sound may warn me.
[*Exit* Flavia.
Cæsar. 'Tis past, Calphurnia.--The try'd faction's hatred
Repell'd obtruded candor.
Cal. Shun they forgiveness?
Cæsar. Men, of contracted views, distrust *kind* meanings:
For, no heart credits, what it cannot feel.
What frightful *story* has my dreamer, now?
Cal. A sad, and dreadful truth--no dream--no doubting:
He, whose dire property the secret rests,
Guardian of Cæsar's life, demands his ear.
For me—I cou'd but speak my fears and follies.
Cæsar. Follies have charms, when fears, like thine, are follies:
Man may draw profit, then, from woman's weakness:
And, in one tender wife's mistaking faith,
Find recompence, for every friend, that's *false*. [*They sit.*
Cal. Can there be rest, in danger?
Cæsar. Sure! there shou'd not.
Cal. Why is ambition, then, too hard for peace?
Why, always busy, to be never blest,
Does restless Cæsar sacrifice, unthank'd,

The

The taſte, the quiet, the *ſerene*, of life,
For an ungrateful world, that hates his bounty ?
Cæſar. 'Tis the great mind's *expected* pain, Calphurnia,
To labour for the thankleſs :—He, who ſeeks
Reward in ruling, makes ambition guilt :
And, living for *himſelf*, diſclaims mankind.
Cal. Alas !—the friend to *all* obliges none.
Cæſar. 'Tis nobler to protect mankind, than pleaſe.
Cal. Is it a crime, when virtue loves *itſelf ?*
Cæſar. Princes ſhou'd *widen* ſelf:—their power, and heart,
Alike receptive, muſt make room for *all :*
'Tis theirs, to ſigh, for every ſufferer's woe ;
Lend their own joys, that others may be glad :
Think ev'n for unborn ages ; and tranſmit
Bleſſings unſhar'd—and quiet, not their own.
Cal. Virtues, ſo rais'd, as theſe, but waſte their warmth,
And ſhine, unfelt, in Rome.———The vulgar eye
Sees, by its own low level.———As men *act*,
They *judge :* and, by corrupt ſelf-intereſt weigh'd,
Goodneſs, *like* Heaven's, wou'd ſeem ſelf-intereſt, too.
Cæſar. No matter.—Virtue triumphs, by neglect :
Vice, while it darkens, lends but *foil*, to brightneſs :
And juſter times, removing ſlander's veil,
Wrong'd merit, after death, is help'd to live.
Cal. Can preſent pain be cur'd, by future eaſe ?
Cæſar. Who wou'd not, once, look dim, to ſhine, for ever?
Cal. How happy is it for a wife, who *loves*,
When *lowlier* proſpects bound her lord's deſires,
And home-felt quiet fills his peaceful heart !
Why wou'd you be a *King ?*———wait, till ſome King
Aſpires, to be a *Cæſar :*———Lend not envy
New props to lean againſt. This threat'ning name
Beats on the Romans' unaccuſtom'd ear,
Like a black ſtorm—and blaſts the hope of liberty.
Cæſar. Never, henceforth, diſturb thy gentle breaſt,
With falſe forebodings, from a regal toy !
Know me above its want :——beyond its glory :
Given, tho' unheld, it meets the Parthian prophecy ;

Bids the rous'd legions' superstitious hearts
Resume lost ardor ; —— and sure victory's theirs.
Cal. Tho' Parthia fell, there's a *patrician* envy,
That, never quench'd, burns with but fiercer blaze,
From each new proof, that old injustice wrong'd thee ;
Think of those midnight haunters of my fancy !
Think, how I saw thee bleed, at every vein :
While, at each spouting stream, a murderous Roman
Stain'd his extended arm, and roar'd for liberty.
Cassius ! —— stern Cassius ! —— [*Starting up.*
—— Blast him, Heaven !—methinks,
I *see* him, *there*, — full, in my eyes, he glares !
Pale, in the horrid transport of his vengeance ;
And, dreadfully, enjoys the ghastly scene !— [*Kneels.*
Oh ! grant thyself, to *live :* grant sad Calphurnia
That prayer :---She begs it, but for Rome, and nature.
Cæsar. Why wilt thou kneel ?--What couldst thou ask, in vain !
Cal. Death--instant death, to that malignant Cassius !
Cæsar. Since thou wer't first my wife, I never saw thee
Cruel, till this strange moment ! —— Dove-like gentle,
Healing compassion sooth'd thy heart, to softness :
And, on thy sparkling eye, sat weeping mercy.
Cal. 'Tis mercy, to mankind, to punish villains.
Cæsar. Rise : and relieve me, from this new distress.
[*Bell rings without.*
Cal. [*Rising.*] I will : -And thou shalt owe to woman's fear
A safety, manly confidence had lost thee.
Cæsar. How art thou heated, by an idle dream,
To strike at fancied guilt, with real anger !
Cal. The wife of Cæsar wrongs not, even his foes.
Flavia ! Lucilia ! here--who waits, without ?
[*Enter a Lady.*
The man, with whom I held discourse, this morning !
Bid him re-enter. [*Exit Lady.*
Cæsar. Who !---*What* man is this ?
Cal. Torbilius--the sour satirist :--thy enemy.
Cæsar. No enemy of mine--if wit's his friend.

Cal.

Cal. Once, when condemn'd, for libelling my Cæſar,
Thy all-permitting mercy, not alone
Forgave—but, bad him claim diſtinguiſh'd *bounty*,
Till wit, miſled, cou'd find the way to judgment.
Cæſar. I know him not:——what can'ſt thou hope, Calphurnia,
From theſe *ſlight* men?——ſo bold, yet, blind of ſoul,
That wit, with them, ſupplies the place of virtue;
And, cenſuring others' faults, abſolve their own.
Cal. Staying, when Portia went, his trembling gratitude
Pray'd audience, in a cauſe, that touch'd the *life*
Of threat'ned Cæſar:—for the reſt, he comes:
Let his own tongue retrace the horrid tale.

SCENE II. Cæſar, Calphurnia, Torbilius.

Tor. Hail, Cæſar! more than victor!--common conquerors
Vanquiſh but power: Cæſar ſubdues the *will*.
Cæſar. Why doſt thou flatter!--Stranger to my paſſions,
Whence wou'd thy ſkill preſume, to judge my virtue?
Take heed, thou ſell'ſt not praiſe, to purchaſe ſcorn!
Encomium is a bold, and dang'rous province!
It calls for reaſon:--- ſlander aſks but rage.
Who art thou?—what is thy pretence, in Rome?
Tor. Touch'd by the *Muſes'* love, I, there, indulge
The tuneful tranſports of ſatiric fire:
Rome is a fruitful field, for themes, like mine!
And Brutus, wit's kind patron! loves my verſe.
Cæſar. Where wit wants patronage--a *ſtate* wants wiſdom.
Keen, tho' the darts, by angry genius thrown,
The wiſe can *guide* 'em, while the baſe *reſtrain*.
Satire, in honeſt hands, is murmuring virtue:
And he, who fears its *biſs*, deſerves its *ſting*.
Yet, 'tis a dangerous, and malignant, good,
Tho' freedom's property, 'tis faction's ſpoil.
Where juſtly bold, 'tis reaſon's manlieſt impulſe:
Where blindly virulent, 'tis wit's diſeaſe
Think, and diſtinguiſh:---are thy cenſures *weigh'd?*

Doſt thou proportion anger, to its cauſe?
Tor. Had I done that, I had not wrong'd thy name.
I was *not* juſt: ——for, I was Cæſar's foe.——
Can Cæſar have forgot Torbilius Aſper?
Cæſar. Why wonder'ſt thou at that?--For my own ſake,
My *friend* imprints remembrance; ——but my foe,
For *his*, ſhou'd be FORGOTTEN.
Tor. Generous Cæſar,
Forgetting *me*, forgets the guilt, he pardon'd,
And claims not his own virtues!
Cæſar. Roman! learn
To meaſure truth, more juſtly: —— *Benefits*,
From their receiver only, claim *remembrance:*
He, who beſtows, and not *forgets* —— *reſumes* 'em.
Tor. Periſh the mem'ry, and the man, together,
When I forget ſuch greatneſs ——
Cal. Spare thy words:
And haſten to diſcloſe thy thanks, in action.
Cæſar. What know'ſt thou, that deſerv'd attention, here?
Tor. Caſſius, whoſe love of Rome, is hate of Cæſar,
Liſts an implicit clan of warm reſenters:
Men, who, with dim diſcernment, tracing liberty,
Plunge headlong in ſedition.——Among theſe,
He ſtoop'd his active brib'ry, ev'n to *me:*
Courting my humble aid, to influence Brutus,
Whoſe name, and power, might maſk the face of *murder.*
Cæſar. Whom would they murder?
Tor. Rome's laſt hope, in Cæſar.
Cal. Now, Cæſar! now, am I an idle dreamer?
Cæſar. Does Brutus know this purpoſe?
Tor. Yet he does not:
And Cæſar, ſtill, might guard the generous heart
Of his belov'd: and ſave him, from the vile.
All flattery's full-try'd power *unites*, to ſhake him:
That done, the *tempter* plies his maſter engine;
Draws him, this day, to meet the aſſaſſin faction:
Then---but that Heaven defends thee---join'd by Brutus;
Th' encourag'd murd'rers *ſtrike:*——not join'd, *forbear.*

Cæſar.

Cæſar. If Cæſar's death muſt wait, till Brutus ſtrikes,
His life wou'd prove immortal! —— Men, of heat,
Like Caſſius, torture their diſtemper'd reaſon,
To act their paſſion's impulſe: —— Brutus weighs
Deſire's warm pleas, in the cool ſcale of juſtice:
Finds force, in others' claims, againſt *himſelf*,
And loves the very virtue that *condemns* him.
Cal. Go on, Torbilius! —— Set, in Cæſar's view,
What Caſſius loves; and point us out *his* virtues.
Cæſar. It ſhall not need;--he ſtands condemn'd, already.
Cal. [*Joyfully*] To *what* condemn'd?
Cæſar. Condemn'd to *live*, Calphurnia.
Cal. What! and not tortur'd?
Cæſar. ——Pride's ſevereſt *rack*
Is that ſharp *mercy*, which deſcends from *ſcorn*.
Think it a fault, to fear theſe choleric praters:
Their hot, ſlight, threat'nings *waſte* themſelves in ſlander;
And rail away revenge to gradual peace:
But, there's a cold, ſlow, ſilent, patient malice,
That carries *miſchief* with it! —— Such a ſoul,
As Brutus acts by —— had it *will*, for murder,
Cool, in its govern'd hate, might call for cruelty. ——
What read'ſt thou?
Tor. Silent ſummoners, to murder:
Theſe Caſſius cauſes to be dropt, with art,
Where Brutus muſt be ſure to find, and read 'em.
Cal. What wiles has malice?
Cæſar. Poor, and petty, *crafts!*
They want but my regard, to lend 'em *weight*.
[*Returning the paper.*
Torbilius, *meet* 'em: —and, with ſtricteſt note,
Mark, what impreſſion Caſſius makes on Brutus.
All, thou canſt learn of *that*, be ſwift to bring me;
And truſt the claims of gratitude, to Cæſar.
Tor. The *grateful* make no *claims*.--A mindful debtor
Pays —— not *obliges*: —— never met, in one,
The *Poet*, and the *Miſer*. —— The ſame fire,
That ſparkles, in his fancy's native blaze,
Glows,

Glows, at his honeſt *heart*; and burns out baſeneſs;
True genius will not—cannot, ſtoop to bribes:
And he, who ſells his *paſſions*, ne'er had wit,——
Or had it, for a curſe, unmix'd with judgment.

Cæſar. 'Tis nobly ſaid;---and, with a warmth, that only
Suſpected virtue feels. ——Henceforth, be *mine*:
On modeſt merit, not to *force* reward,
Were to *degrade* ſupremacy.

Cal. Where meet they?

Tor. In the cool *grot*, behind the *Platan* grove:
There Brutus, oft alone, and oft with friends,
Steals an unbuſied hour, for reaſoning deeply:
Or, in free mirth, dilates the ſlack'ning ſoul.

Cal. What was th' appointed *time?*

Tor. The fatal choice,
Yet doubtful, muſt depend alone on Brutus.
Some three hours, hence, I look to find 'em met.

Cal. Go, good Torbilius.——Wait within my call:
For I ſhall try thy faith in Cæſar's cauſe. [*Exit* Torbilius.

SCENE III. Cæſar, Calphurnia.

Cal. I am alarm'd, for Brutus!

Cæſar. Doubt him not:

Cal. Is he *ambitious?*

Cæſar. No,—but he is *vain.*

Cal. Then, beyond hope, he's loſt.—Ambitious men
Lead, and diſcern——but vain ones follow, blind.

Cæſar. Thou haſt contagious power, in that ſuſpicion:
Great minds, on ſome unguarded quarter, *weak*,
Find their try'd virtue, *there*, ſublimely frail:
Were Caſſius *artful!* ---had his malice, *coldneſs*,
—Cou'd he firſt *praiſe*,--and, then, attack, where warmeſt,
The public-hearted Brutus!

Cal. Nay he does;
'Tis from that point, he levels all his aim.——
Who knows not Brutus proud!---and flattery's art

Sets

Sets pride at work, to *ſap* her own foundation:
And pull down character, to build up name.
Cæſar. Then, Caſſius merits my regard:---and dies:
Light, in *himſelf*, he, yet, deſerves but ſcorn:
Awak'ning danger, in corrupted Brutus,
He makes his own rais'd miſchief worth revenge.
Cal. But, can I truſt a doubt, like this, to chance?
Th' unſure converſion of a raſh man's ſpleen?
Who knows, but, feigning penitence, Torbilius
Courts you to confidence, he would betray?
No ---It ſhall ne'er be ſaid, that Cæſar's *wife*
Left Cæſar's ſafety, to another's faith.
She, who, too lightly weighs a huſband's danger,
Takes arms, at heart, againſt him.
Cæſar. Truſt Torbillius,
He will deſerve thy faith:——reflecting minds,
By gratitude once gain'd, relapſe no more.
Cal. Thus will I *ſound* his purpoſe:---then, confide.—
Portia, this morning, preſs'd a viſit, from me:
Oft, thro' her garden's private gate, unmark'd,
Ent'ring alone, that *grot*, invites my notice:
There, ſilently conceal'd, where art-form'd rocks
Lend jutting umbrage to the *cavy* ſcreen,
I *hear*, what Caſſius moves:——what Brutus yields:
This, if the ſatiriſt diſſuades:——he's *falſe*:
This, if he aids, Calphurnia judges Caſſius:
And *life*, or *death*, be his, as juſtice dooms.
Cæſar. In love, and anger, woman's will is *deaf*.
I know, thy gen'rous purpoſe is too firm,
To let my fears for *thee*, forbid this danger.
Yet, while, in dread of mine, thou dar'ſt thus raſhly,
Be it my care to interpoſe, in thine.
Curio, the *tribune*, with a guard, muſt wait thee.
Cal. Their number will detect me.
Cæſar. No,---let Torbilius,
Singly, and ſlow, unnotic'd, introduce 'em,
Thro' the lone poſtern, that adjoins the grove. [dare
Cal. Bleſs the kind thought!--and now, ſhou'd murder

One

One *glance*, at thy dear boſom, bloody Caſſius
Shall, on the guilty ſpot, that moment *die*.
Cæſar. Spare thy diſorder'd heart.---Caſſius is haſty!
But, Brutus ſhall, with mild reproof, reduce
The madman's rage, and ſhame him into ſafety.
I dread to *arm* thee.——Prejudice is raſh.———
Cal. Have I been *ſubject*, then, to raſh impreſſions?
Cæſar. Thy reaſon, I cou'd truſt--but not thy anger:
Religion's curb, in hearts, like thine, binds ſureſt:
Swear by ſome ſacred *tye*.———
Cal. Hear me, *whole Heaven!*
By Rome's rais'd fate!—by her forefathers' Gods!
By aweful Veſta's unexpiring flame!
By Venus, mother of thy race, O Cæſar!
If treaſon leaves but time to reach thy ear,
Ere danger catch thy life——Caſſius ſhall live,
To learn his doom from thee,——— and 'ſcape my vengeance.
Cæſar. See! the concurring Gods have ſent thee Curio!

SCENE IV. Cæſar, Calphurnia, Curio.

Cur. Shouts, from impatient crowds, demand a King;
And *royal* Cæſar glads the ſtreets of Rome.
Cæſar. [*After writing in a table-book*.] Curio!—Joy's flattering ſounds are loud deceivers:——
Calphurnia's buſy fears have trac'd a traitor,
Born to high rank, and fam'd for arms, and envy.
Go, with due ſtrength; guard thou the wife of Cæſar:
And, if this *blank*, that, now, conceals his *name*,
Fill'd, by *her* hand, points out the guilty Roman,
Weigh Cæſar's life, with *his*:—and be *this warrant*
Thy ſword's *authority*, to do me right.
[*Giving the table-book to* Curio.
Cur. Where-e'er your danger warrants me to ſtrike,
If treaſon 'ſcape my ſword,——let flight in war,
Want,——and eternal infamy, revenge,
The cauſe of Cæſar, on his ſoldier's name!

Cæſar.

Cæſar. Marc Antony return'd!
Cal. Curio! thy ear.———

SCENE V. Cæſar, Antony.

Ant. All is prepar'd;—pale Caſſius looks ſtill paler:
And ſtarts at every *ſhout*, that ſhakes the *Forum.*
Never, henceforth, let noiſe be call'd ſedition:
Rome's public mouth out-roars a *hundred Senates!*
One loud conſent unites her grateful tribes,
And Parthia's fall takes date, from Cæſar's crown.
Cæſar. Join'd Brutus, in that voice?
Ant. No Roman hop'd it:
Reſerves, they know, muſt guard the *Stoic*'s gravity:
What four ſolemnity of look, like his,
Stoops a loſt *ſmile*, to grace Plebeian *lightneſs!*
Men, who can *laugh*, as I do,——jovial thinkers!
Fram'd for their eaſe, and born, to hate affliction!
See things, but as they *are!* void of the *wit*,
That hunts for cover'd anguiſh! Long, ſound ſleepers!
Dull, ſatisfy'd, glad rogues! they truſt their ſenſes,
Love their friends, *beſt:* and wiſh, but what they want.
Brutus is deep:—dives farther into bliſs;———
Shakes his ſuperior brow, and *pities* fools,
Who dare be *happy*, againſt rules of policy.
Cæſar. Where cou'dſt thou find him, now?
Ant. Immur'd, at home,
Sagely deſpiſing his good Lords,—the People:——
And ſhutting Cæſar's triumph, from his ear.
Cæſar. Take this occaſion, Antony, to viſit him;
Bid his wiſh'd preſence grace the public zeal!
If he declines it, ſting him, to reſentment:
Watch, in that warmth of heart, what thoughts eſcape him;
Sound the dark depth of his deſigns;—and tell him,
That to the Capitol, thou mean'ſt to bring me,
Rome's *crown*, by freemen given to guard their liberty.
Ant. How noiſy is that *nothing!* all its virtue
Dwells in its ſound:—it means but cover'd tyranny.

Cæſar.

Cæſar. Ever diſtinguiſh ſubſtances, from ſound;
There is in liberty, what Gods approve;
And only men, *like* Gods, have taſte, to ſhare.
There is in liberty, what pride perverts,
To ſerve ſedition, and perplex command.
True liberty leaves all things free, —— but guilt;
And fetters every thing — but art and virtue:
Falſe liberty holds nothing bound, but *power*,
And lets looſe every tye, that ſtrengthen's law.
Ant. Cæſar, in ſcience, as in power ſupreme,
Calls luſtre, out of darkneſs! —— But to *me*,
What ſeems moſt ſtrange, of faction's ſtrange effects,
Is, that among thoſe crowds, ſhe tempts to miſchief,
I ſee *good* men, belov'd for every virtue!
Blindly misdrawn, to *hate* the peace they *wiſh*.
Cæſar. Boaſt fully blind, a bigot's proof is *truſt*;
Faultleſs in purpoſe, yet —— his choice unjuſt!
Active, that erring zeal may truth invade,
Enthuſiaſt pride obtrudes her blund'ring aid.
Fierce to the field, keen diſputants ſhe draws,
Implicit props of ſome unreaſoning cauſe!
Th' abſurd reformer *order* overthrows,
And works up diſcord —— for the world's *repoſe!*
Jealous of enemies, diſquiets friends,
Groans without wound, and without fruit contends:
Wildly ſincere! unprevalently ſtrong!
Struggling for right —— and introducing wrong:

ACT III. SCENE I.

A grand Apartment in the Houſe of Brutus. Brutus, Antony.

Brut. URGE it no more —— I am fix'd.
Ant. Think wiſelier, Brutus.
Brut. Conſul! when bold oppreſſion grapples law,
Men, who protect th' oppreſſor, ſtab the ſtate.

Ant.

Ant. Men, who ſo roughly dare miſcharge their *Lord*,
Pretending liberty, purſue but pride.
Brut. Cæſar, however rais'd, is leſs than *Lord*.
Ant. Cæſar, however wrong'd, is more than friend:
Even gratitude has made *reſpect* a duty:
Preſent, or abſent thou —— the Tribes will crown him.
Brut. Crown? whom?
Ant. One, whom if Brutus knew but rightly—
Brut. I fear I do!
Ant. No—if you did, you'd tremble.
Brut. I have already trembled, Antony!
Trembled —— to hear a Roman tempt a Roman,
And dare corrupt a patriot, yet unfold!
Ant. Corrupt, I wou'd not—All I wou'd, I dare.
Brut. The baſely bold ſhould learn to dread the juſt.
Ant. When Brutus bids me dread—I hear and ſmile.
Brut. Smile on your *King*: Flattery was made for thrones.
The rough, wrong'd, Roman frowns with honeſt ſcorn.
Ant. Brutus, I rev'rence *firmneſs*; but deſpiſe
Th' hypocriſy of envy! I have a heart,
That being human, feels for humankind.
I tow're not to the Gods:—virtue, once rais'd
Above compaſſion, ceaſes to *be* virtue:
Aiming at more than *man*, thou ſink'ſt to leſs.
Brut. I wou'd be leſs than *King*; and more than *Slave*.
Ant. Farewel—raſh zealots blindly grow unjuſt;
And pride inflexible, and deaf, as thine,
Profeſſing virtue, makes ev'n virtue *hateful*. [*Exit*

SCENE II. Brutus *(alone)*

Heaven! what a change in Rome---breathe theſe *her* ſoul!
Oh! griev'd Quirinus! what reproach were thine,
Did not thy fellow Gods diſdain to note us!
Rome has no remnant now, of Roman greatneſs:
Sold, or ſeduc'd, we give up claim by claim,
Till even our virtues are engroſs'd by Cæſar!
O, ſouls of long loſt glory! *Fabii! Decii!*

O, all ye Pompey's! Scipio's! Cato's! hear me!
Re-kindle in my breaſt, your patriot lights,
And live, once more in Brutus!———fill this heart,
With Cæſar's fire——but, let it flame for Rome.

SCENE III. Brutus, Torbilius.

Brut. Torbilius! thou intrud'ſt on my retirement:
The Muſe, and my ſad heart, are now, not ſocial.
Torb. Caſſius approaches.——*There*'s a name, indeed,
Unſocial!——every Muſe wou'd ſtart to hear it.
Brut. Thou wrong'ſt him.---Caſſius is a noble Roman.
Tor. There is a *jaundice* in thy judgment, Brutus,
That lends him golden colour from thy own:
I know him, to the ſoul.———Have ſounded all
The ſhallows of his envy;———and I *cou'd*,
But that an *oath* injoin'd, has bound my tongue,
Convince thee, that he dares aſſault thy *honour*;
And plots, to blaſt thee to the world, for ever.
Brut. Who bound thee by ſuch oath?
Tor. Calphurnia's piety.
Brut. What had Calphurnia's piety to do
With plots, and oaths, and ſecrecy, and Brutus?
Tor. Earneſt, *herſelf*, to warn endanger'd Brutus
With conſequence, ſhe fear'd, *my* words might *loſe*,
She claims your inſtant ear:———Be ſwift—incline it.
Shun the too near approach of Caſſius, hither:
And, haſt'ning to the houſe of Cæſar, *weigh*
What her wiſh forms to guard thy fame and virtue.
Brut. Thou art too bold, Torbilius:---tell Calphurnia,
I, beſt, myſelf, defend my honour's claims:
And graſp too hard, to need a *woman*'s aiding.
Torbilius!---Rome has *loſt* thee.---Cæſar's bounties
Have brib'd thy *gratitude*, to ſlander honeſty.
Tor. Ill am I known, where moſt my heart lies open,
If, after all my raſh contempts of *power*,
Brutus can doubt me *venal*:———Yet, doubt on:
No *undeſerv'd* reproach *adheres* to virtue.

No

No matter what bold ſlander wounds Torbilius, [ſhip.
Where he, who wrongs him, has the rights of friend-
Brut. I will not ſee Calphurnia.
Tor. Oh! revoke
Thoſe fatal words, leſt ———
Brut. By the Gods I will not;
Till Caſſius, and his friends have firſt been heard.
Tor. Caſſius is Cæſar's enemy.
Brut. But I
Am Brutus; ——— and thou know'ſt me Cæſar's friend.
Let that truth, known, content thee.
Tor. ——— No. ——— It cannot:
Brutus not fearing, I muſt fear for Brutus.
Greatneſs of foul, confiding in *itſelf*,
Expoſes an unguarded ſide to baſeneſs.
Brut. What wou'dſt thou lead me to?
Tor. To one kind *promiſe:*
I urge it but to *ſave* thee. ——— I conjure thee;
By every claim of long, untir'd adherence!
By every recompence, thou ow'ſt my dangers!
By every grateful ſenſe of every duty!
Love, friendſhip, reverence, faith, advice, and ſervice!
Promiſe, whatever dire reſult the Gods
Permit, —— for Caſſius comes on no light errand! ——
Previous to any *deed*, thy will may purpoſe,
To hear *my* thoughts: ——— intruſt me with thy own:
And teach my willing hand and heart to aid thee.
Brut. I ſee thee ſtrangely *mov'd*:---I will, by Heaven!
Intruſt thee, unreſerv'd, and ſeek thy counſel.
Tor. Bark on ye dogs of envy! bark in vain:
Brutus is ſafe and ſpotleſs. [*Exit* Torbilius.
Brut. [*Alone.*] ——— Cæſar's graces
Win every heart! and no *corruption*'s power
Out-bribes the native ſweetneſs of his *pity.*

SCENE IV. Brutus, Caſſius, Decimus, Cinna, Caſca.

Caſ. Hail! death-devoted Brutus! Rome's *laſt* friend!
Dec. Guardian in vain, of our expiring liberty!

Caſ. Cæſar, to-morrow, marches hence a *King*.
Brut. What are Rome's proſpects, *then?*
Caſ. Taxes and chains,
Brutus, farewel for ever. [*Embracing.*
——Life grows ſhameful,
Where freedom is reſign'd, and man's a *ſlave*.
Brut. Can Caſſius feel deſpair?
Caſ. When Rome deſpairs.
Dec. When even her ſoul—her Brutus!—breathes for Cæſar.
Caſ. No force on earth, but *our* unſhaken hearts
Held back this bold invader.
Dec. Cæſar's too *wiſe*,
To ſpare our lives, who live,—to ſhake his throne.
Caſ. Eſcaping us, he meets but *men*:—not Romans.
Brut. Oh! honour, virtue, and the rights of *law!*
Caſ. 'Tis *paſt*: —— the laws *have been*.——Honour and virtue
Are now the public jeſt of penſion'd paraſites:
Who *ſell* ſubmiſſion, and receive back ——ſcorn.
Dec. Rome, and the world are fall'n!--'tis Cæſar's, all!
Caſ. All, that ſix hundred bleeding years have gain'd,
Thrown, at one caſt, to Cæſar!—Why had times
Like theſe, a Brutus? —— Grac'd with fruitleſs virtues?
Brut. If I have virtues—*why* ſhould they be *fruitleſs?*
Caſ. Join every Power above—to bleſs that queſtion!
Dec. Hear yon licentious noiſe! [*Shouts at a diſtance.*
Brut. ——Curſe the vile ſound!
'Tis breath of adulation! Rome's loſt Gods
Expell'd!--and incenſe paid to human *pride!* [*Shouts again.*
Caſ. Again!——Thoſe ſhouts are inſult.
Dec. ——Cimber comes,
And, if I read him rightly in his *look*,
Cæſar's attempts *ſucceed*;—for, ſee! he's *angry*.

SCENE V. Brutus, Caſſius, Decimus, Cinna, Caſca, Cimber.

Caſ. Tell us, what *wou'd* they?
Cim. ——*Slavery*, they wou'd.

Brut.

Brut. Have we a *King* in Rome?
Cim. Have we a *freeman?*
Caſ. What call you Cæſar?
Brut. Leſs, when he dares be *more*.
Cim. Cæſar high-ſeated,—Sovereign of the ſlaves!
Shone from the Capitol, as who wou'd ſay,
Make me a *God*, and Rome ſhall ſhake with thunder;
Up, from ten thouſand bribe-atteſting throats,
Flew purchas'd gratulation: "Hail, great Cæſar!
"Rome's dread avenger!——Fate of puniſh'd Parthia!
"Star of thy country's hope? and war's brave guider!"
Timely, to cool this madneſs, at its height,
So Heaven decreed it!——in ſtalks Antony;
Blaſt him, deaf Genius of devoted Rome!
A cuſhion'd *crown* and *ſcepter* ſham'd his hands:
Yet, was his venal eye fix'd bold on Cæſar.
Down ſunk, at once, the tempeſt of applauſe;
Huſh'd, as a coward, in his midnight buſh,
The ſick'ning people *flatter'd* into ſilence;
He, 'midſt a horrid glare of wide-ſtretch'd eyes,
Unheeding, on his maſter's brow, ſet, oft,
The regal *gew-gaw*:——then, with abject knee,
Bent, for *inſtructive* homage,——*Be* a KING,
He cry'd—and reign o'er Rome that rules the *world*.
Cæſar, mean while, who watch'd the public eye,
And read reluctance, grief, and terror, *there*;
Starting indignant with well-acted ſcorn,
Hurl'd from his front the *uninclining* toy;
And cry'd---"I am *not King*, my friend---but Cæſar."
Brut. O, truth!---beyond all pride of kingly greatneſs!
Cim. Then, general joy new-voic'd the gaping preſs;
And ſhook the diſtant roofs, with loud concurrence;
Even Antony, then bluſh'd.
Caſ. And did not Cæſar?
Cim. Cæſar ſmil'd ſweet *contempt*:——and then, *again*,
Th'unfeeling fools, more charm'd, renew'd their ſhouting.
I laugh'd aloud: to mark him thanking Rome,
For *finding* virtues in him, which he had not!

At length, diſdainful of the hard conſtraint,
Parting, he frown'd *ſincerity*.---The reſt
You'll learn when I do.
Brut. What means that?
Cim. ——— Anon,
The Senate ſits.
Brut. What then?
Cim. Why then, ſix hours
May paſs, betwixt *his* puſhing back the crown,
And our expected votes, to bid him *take* it.
Brut. Holds he that hope?
Dec. Yes: and who *helps* us?
Caſ. ——— *Death.*
Brut. Death is indeed, the ſlave's laſt hope:---but he,
Who dares embrace that help, might find a better.
Caſ. While my doom'd country had a gaſp for life,
I ſtruggled on, to *live:* —— Now, world farewel!
No God ſuſtain'd me, to *ſupport* the State:
But, to *die*, *with* it, ſtill is left to freedom.
To Heaven's imperial Rome, *from ours*, I go;
There, no bold Cæſar ſways.——*There* Pompey ſerves!
No Roman there need bluſh to own a *maſter:*
Where even a Cato finds and fears a *Lord!*
Theſe will I follow thus. [*Drawing his ſword.*
Brut. [*Diſarming him.*]——Follow we *none:*
'Tis ours to lend, not borrow, brave example.
'Tis ours, to ſtem the tide of a bad world,
And juſtify to *time* the Roman greatneſs.
Much is to *anger* due———but more to Rome.
Cato had died unblam'd——firſt, *killing* Cæſar;
But, turning on *himſelf* his erring ſword,
He fell, *unjuſtly:* ——— for, he puniſh'd *innocence.*
Caſ. What *can* we, in a world, deſpairing, round us?
Brut. [*Shewing a billet.*] See! what the friends of liberty expect!
See! what they *hope* from Romans!
Caſ. This reproach
I, too, have met with:——and 'twas hard to bear!

Brut.

Brut. Caſſius---'twas harder, far,—to have *deſerv'd* it.
Cim. Good *talkers* might attract a *gown-man's* praiſe:
And had time *ears*——fine words were marks of *wiſdom:*
But loſe this day, no orator, in Rome,
Muſt be admir'd but Cæſar.
Brut. ——Ere this day
Yet paſſes——twenty tyrants *fortunate,*
As ours——but never *greatneſs* equall'd Cæſar!
Might expiate with their *lives,* their bold ambition.
Cim. Ay! that's a flower of ſpeech, *my* rhetoric reaches!
Caſ. Rome *lives* again! ſhe breath'd in that rais'd voice!
And Brutus has reviv'd her.—
Dec. —— Fatal *name*
To tyrants!—— Brutus, to aſſert his *race,*
Speaks the dire duty, which *we* dar'd but *think.*
Caſ. My friend has reconcil'd me to myſelf;——
If there be future *glory* due to Caſſius,
Brutus beſtows it all ——BRUTUS! and ROME!
Flow mix'd, ye reverend names, down time's dark ſtream!
By ages, emulating ages, bleſs'd!
Decimus! Cinna! Caſca! Patriots! Romans!
Join your ſwords' aid: Obey this generous leader.
Live to approve, and to ſupport his vengeance;
And drive dejection from the heart of virtue.
Cim. All Rome will think, and act, with Roman Brutus.
Dec. Born the ſuſtainers of Patrician honour,
Senates, deſpis'd, wou'd fall with double *ſhame,*
Surviv'd, by their deſpiſer.——
Caſ. ——See a *liſt*
Shining with names, of Rome's diſtinguiſh'd ſons!
Aſſociates all, to ſtrike one glorious blow!
Brut. [*Taking the paper.*] Soft Caſſius,—have a care!
nor arm revenge
Too ſtrongly——leſt it look, perhaps, like baſeneſs.
One were enough to bid a tyrant *die,*
Who dar'd himſelf, *die with* him.
Caſ. Romans numberleſs
Stand, now prepar'd for ſummons.
Brut. ——Summon *none:*

Shou'd they be *ſold* to Cæſar, they're untruſty:——
And, if they *fear* him, heartleſs.——
Caſ. Such a *tongue*,
As Cicero's——
Cim. No---let us liſt no *praters*;
Theſe ſpeech-men of the *ſenate* range but periods:
Tropes are their *javelins*:---*Climax* forms their *ranks*:
And, when they *charge*, 'tis with ſome ſmart *harangue*.
'Twill be renown enough for theſe *tongue-cohorts*,
To praiſe our bravery, when it meets *ſucceſs*;
Or, if it *fails*, teach pliant law to *teize* us.
Caſ. Enough!——then Cæſar finds us in the *ſenate*:--
Brut. There, be it lawful, O immortal guiders!
To conſecrate *this ſword*, that once was Cato's,
To Cato's death reveng'd! and murder'd Pompey's.
[*Draws.*
[*All the* Conſpirators *draw their ſwords.*]
Caſ. Now, I *will* live.—— Life now becomes a Roman.
Brut. No.——Let no vain falſe *hope* of *life* deceive ye:
Know;——yet deſpiſe your *danger*.——Cæſar's friends
Crowd his tame *ſenate*:——ardent all! and try'd,
In ſervice of their maſter, while the people,
The ſuffering people! pleas'd at once, and wretched!
Doat on the tyrant's *heart*, whoſe *hand* they fear!
Think too, 'tis Cæſar we preſume to wound:
Cæſar, who aw'd an *army* with his *frown*!
Our death, in the attempt, is fix'd as fate:
But *what* a death!---How to be wiſh'd and envied!
Dying, that *unborn* Rome may live in liberty!
Caſ. How will our deaths endear yon aweful *Capitol*!
That ſeat of our oppreſſion, doom'd by Heaven
The ſcene of our revenge!
Dec. ——But ſhou'd the people——
Cim. Why let the people *prate*:---ſo people *will*---
Bleſs the light murmurings of their hungry love!
Poor *gnats*! they know, 'tis ſummer, now with Cæſar:
Cloud but his ſunſhine——all their buzzing ceaſes.

Brut.

Brut. Kneel, generous friends: Raiſe your right hands to Heaven;

[*They kneel*, Brutus *continues ſtanding.*

Swear——by the all-dreaded Powers, to wait *my* call:
Nor, till I *found* him, touch the *life* of Cæſar.——

All the conſpirators. We *ſwear.*——

Brut.---But ſhou'd he--(ſome kind God reſtrain him!)
Force my afflicted hand, to point the way.——
Then, by that thin, pale, flight of Roman ghoſts,
Whoſe hov'ring forms ſkim o'er th' unburied bones,
Which the wan moon ſees whit'ning twelve loſt Fields!
Their murd'rer, if he reigns, in Rome——

All. Shall *die!*

Caſ. Brutus, kneel *with* us.--Rome exempts no knee.,

[*Brut. Kneels.*

Blaſt, Heaven! the man, who ſpares a tyrant's life!
Be he ſon, patron, brother, friend, or--father!

Brut. Or *Father?*--Caſſius!

Caſ. Son, friend, father, brother:
Tyrants can claim no kindred: they renounce
All *ſocial* ties;—and *hate* a *hating* world.
The expanding ſoul, that ſwells a Roman breaſt,
Stretch'd beyond rights of blood, *atones* 'em, *all*,
By virtue, glory, liberty, and law.

Brut. Be it, then, SWORN.--

All.--By Earth, and Heaven, we *ſwear.*

Brut. Soul-ſhaking oath!——'tis paſt, and, from this moment, [*Riſe and put up their ſwords.*
No man has parent, child, or friend---but Rome.
If there, among us, *ſhrinks* one recreant ſlave,
Curſe him, ye Gods! for every guilt of Cæſar!
And never let his *race* know comfort, more. [*Loud thunder.*
Hark! the confirming Powers *approve* my curſe——
Or, teſtify *diſlike*, in peals of thunder!

Caſ. Let 'em *call* on: the brave, they know, are ready.

Brut. We meet, then, at the *Capitol.*

Caſ. ——Haſte, Decimus——
With heedful caution, ſummon each great name,

That gilds our glorious lift :—previous, we meet,
(Immortal Brutus !) in thy aweful *Grot*,
There, ſhalt thou fan their fire ; confirm their hearts :
Unite their purpoſe, and inſtruct their *hands* :
That one concurring ſpirit may direct,
And no confuſion riſe, to blaſt our vengeance.
Brut. 'Tis dreadful !— but, 'tis *neceſſary*. —— Mark !
When yon pale *ſun*, that, with receding ray,
Starts from our notic'd purpoſe ! —— When that *ſun*,
Slow-meaſuring ſheds an *hour* —— this private key
Admits you, thro' the grove.—Be punctual all.
[*Gives* Caſſius *a key, then advances to a ſtatue of* Cato.
Cato ! loſt *ſoul* of freedom ! *Witneſs* for me !
Here, I diveſt my heart of love, grief, pity,
Of every tender call of pleading *nature*,
That moves too ſoft a pang. [*The thunder repeated.*
—— *Again !* —— 'Tis ſtrange !
Why hangs this infelt *weight*, upon my purpoſe !
Can it be *terrible* —— to die for Rome !
What has he left to *fear*, who ſaves his *country* !
[*Enter* Marcellus, *haſtily.*
Mar. Break off — or, be prevented : —— Cæſar *comes.*
Caſ. Now, let him die.
Brut. —— Avoid him, thro' that gallery.
[*Exeunt Conſpirators.*

SCENE VI. Brutus, Cæſar.

Cæſ. With whom doſt thou retire ?
Brut. —— With baniſh'd liberty.
Cæſar. Vain, honeſt purpoſer ! Made weak by virtue !
Th u wrong'ſt the friend of every wiſh, thou form'ſt.
Cited by Antony, why cam'ſt thou not ?
Or why, *not* coming, was reproach thought needful ?
With inſolent *contempt* of power above thee,
Find'ſt thou delight, in living to *offend ?*
There's not a name, in all thy private friendſhips,
That is not mark'd, in public, as *my* foe.

Brut.

Brut. When foes to Cæſar are the friends of Rome,
May Heaven inſpire his will, to love their counſel!

Cæſar. Speak out:--the *juſt enjoy* the ſlanderer's *malice*,
And weigh their virtue's force, by bad men's *cenſure*.

Brut. All men confeſs the force of Cæſar's virtues:
Reſiſtleſs virtues!——They *endear* the *chains*
Of a ſubmitting world, that ſmiles, and ſuffers!

Cæſar. Thou art, thyſelf, in chains, and ſee'ſt it not;
Thou art that pooreſt of blind ſlaves—a *tool!*
Whoſe bluntneſs works for wills, that ſcorn thy promptneſs,
So work'd they, once, on Pompey.--Weak, well-meaner,
Driven, yet, too proud to *follow!*---Had *he* conquer'd,
His flexile yoke had gall'd both men and laws:
Then, what had Brutus been?

Brut.——Lord of *one dagger*.

Cæſar. Fell mind!——And can there none be found for Cæſar?

Brut. Strike, firſt,--and blaſt the diſtant poſſibility!

Cæſar. No;—Brutus!—There's a power forbids that blow:
Read this, blind wanderer!——Know *thyſelf*, and *me*.
[*Gives him* Servilia's *letter*.

Brut. Cæſar, I *die*:—puniſh'd by Heaven's juſt hand.
At once, my *life* forſakes me, and my *love*.
Pity, when I am gone, and think of——Brutus:
The life, *you* gave him [*ſtarts*] will deſerve your care.
Farewel!—And, for the *father*, may the Gods,
To the ſon's heart, tranſfer the mother's love!
[*Reads* Servilia's *letter*.
Servilia!——Heavens! Servilia,——wrote *ſhe* this?
She *did*,——and, if I *wake*, Rome ſleeps for ever.

Cæſar. I had not thought, till my return from Parthia,
To truſt thee with this ſecret of thy birth:
But to protect thee from the wiles of Caſſius,
I claim thee, and precipitate my purpoſe.
[*Offers to embrace him, who ſtarts back.*

Brut. Rome! Virtue! nature!

Cæſ. Nature! Young man, call it

By

By its ſincerer title! call it *pride*,
Self-ſoothing.——Hurl your bolts, ye Gods! at *faction!*
Faction!—that finds a power to blot out *nature!*
Brut. Spare an aſtoniſh'd *wretch*, who lives too long.
Cæſar. Is there, who *fears* to be the ſon of Cæſar?
Wretch, ſay'ſt thou!---to be born the world's *next heir*,
And reap the laurels of a hundred victories?
Brut. Oh, Cæſar!
Cæſar. Lab'ring with a *will* to ſpeak,
Some in-felt horror checks thy riſing accents.
Brut. Cæſar!
Cæſar. Speak like my ſon.
Brut. Wou'd I were *dead!*
Cæſar. Sounds *death* more ſoft than ſon?
Brut. Such, if I *am*,
Brutus, unbow'd to *Kings*, may kneel to Cæſar. [*Kneels.*
Cæſar. On.———
Brut. [*Offering his ſword.*] ——Kill me;——or, for-bear to be a *King*.
Cæſar. Thy very *ſoul's* a rebel:—not alone
To *power*, but even to *blood:*——unnatural traitor!
Riſe, and repent:——and, when thou think'ſt, like *man*,
Be own'd Rome's ſon, and mine:—till then, be Brutus.
[*Turning to go.*
Brut. [*Holding his robe.*] Oh! ſtay.—I never can quit claim to Cæſar;
Hear, if a *father*, with a father's ear;
Or, judge with a friend's heart, and eaſe my horror.
Cæſar. Leave me.—my heart is *adamant*:---away;——
My blood grows warm againſt thee: dread thy danger.
Be gone——or, I ſhall catch diſdain, from thine,
Till, conqu'ring *pity*, to repel *preſumption*,
To puniſh inſolence, I puſh back *nature*.
Cæſar, at leaſt, was *born*, to govern Brutus.
Brut. He was——he was——but *not* to govern Rome.
Cæſar. Headſtrong *enthuſiaſt!* Stubbornneſs, like thine,
Embroils republics; and makes tyrants *needful:*
Go: join thy ſavage friends: chaſe *fear* from faction:

Bid

Bid guilt ſleep ſafe, in my *contempt* of treachery:
Their conqueror ſtands ſubdued, by his own *mercy*:
—Yet bid their blindneſs *learn*, when claims contend,
And rights invaded rouſe reſenting realms,
'Tis *fierceneſs*, *in the free*, moſt hazards freedom.
Power when provok'd too far, miſguides dominion,
And liberty is *loſt* to puniſh pride. [*Exit* Cæſar.

Brut. [*Riſing.*] Let me not *leave* him, tho' deſpair has caught me:
But, following, ſigh for Rome——and live for Cæſar.
Why was I born to *think*, and be *unbleſs'd*,
To licenſe reaſon, is to forfeit reſt:
He, who aſſumes *diſtinction*, calls for woe;
Peace is a cottage claim, and loves the low.
Nor ſhame, nor truſt, nor envy, *finds* us, there!
Hearts, *fill'd with quiet*, leave no void for *care*.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

A Grot in the Garden of Brutus.

Calphurnia, Torbilius.

Cal. 'TIS near the appointed hour.

Tor. I judge, 'tis *paſt*.

Cal. Then Heaven, that loves its *likeneſs*, wake for Cæſar!

Tor. In this out-grot, they meet:——In that adjoining,
Curio has cloſe conceal'd his choſen guard,
Each moment ſtrength'ning, by admitting ſtiles:
Hence vocal windings, which pervade the rock,
Swell whiſp'ring ſounds to loudneſs.

Cal. How *look'd* Portia?

Tor. *Sad*--till ſhe heard your animating name:
Then, like a ſun-beam, radiant thro' a miſt,

She

She ſmil'd away her anguiſh.
Cal. ——At her approach,
——Leave me, Torbilius.
Tor. ——Who then guards you hence?
Cal. I mark'd th' impending *ivy*, o'er the arch——
Grieve not, tho' pride repell'd thy honeſt purpoſe,
Nor fear th' endanger'd fate of ſtubborn Brutus:
My friendſhip, in alarming Portia's dread,
Will caution, and preſerve him.——Go:——ſhe's here.
[*Exit* Torbilius, *bowing to* Portia, *whom he meets entering.*

SCENE II. Calphurnia, Portia.

Por. This mournful grot ne'er touch'd my taſte till now:
But preſent friends bring *ſunſhine* to the ſoul,
And ſeats of horror change to ſcenes of bliſs.
'Twas fortunate, thou call'dſt thy Portia, *hither!*
Brutus is ſad to-day, and purpoſes
Retirement, here, beneath this ſullen ſhade:
Our preſence will relieve him.
Cal. ——*Step* him, Portia!
Let me not find him:——ſave my eyes that horror!
Por. Good Heaven!——What has he done?
Cal. Stay not, to aſk:
Even that loſt moment may be *fatal* to him.
Go; bid him guard his ear from cruel Caſſius:
Time will permit no more; go, warn him—ſave him—
If thou delay'ſt a moment, fate o'ertakes him;
And ſtaying but, till Caſſius comes——he *dies*,
Por. Be clear in pity to my beating heart;
Brutus has been traduc'd.—He loaths all falſehood.
Cal. Shunning the falſehood loath'd, he may be ſafe.
Por. He comes—Now, hear him juſtify his fame,
From this foul charge——and vindicate thy goodneſs.
Cal. No.--'Tis thy weight muſt ſhake his conſcious ſoul,
Save his endanger'd name, and bleſs my notice.
Por. I cannot *move*:——forgive my trembling *knees*,
My heart reſtrains their power.

Cal.

Cal. Alas! I pity thee:
Reſt, and recall thy ſpirits, and receive him.
[*Aſide.*] Now, to my fatal poſt.——— [*Exit.*

SCENE III. Portia. [*Alone.*]

[*After an aſtoniſh'd pauſe.*
———Some dreadful meaning!
And my too wakeful *fears* confirm it *juſt*:
Caſſius, of late, with warm, aſſiduous art,
Flatters my Brutus, whom his envy *ſhun'd*:
Caſſius is wily, proud, malicious, bitter!
Burns, with ungovern'd hate: and brooks not Cæſar.
Aſſociate vice may *taint* the ſoundeſt virtue:
And *honour* bleeds, ſhou'd Cæſar fall by Brutus!
Not that my patriot heart diſclaims the Roman!
I, who was born to liberty's great guardian,
By right of *nature*, ſhun tyrannic ſway:
Yet Brutus——twice offending——twice forgiven,
Twice, forfeited to Cæſar's clemency,
His own loſt rights to juſtice:——ſhou'd he, then,
Quench the kind light, he lives by, the raſh murderer
Kills his own fame, and dies to every virtue.

SCENE IV. Portia, Brutus.

Brut. Who call'd thee hither, Portia?
Por. Rome's kind Gods.
Brut. In haſte, they ſummon'd, and, in haſte they left thee.
Was it, becauſe they ſaw Calphurnia with thee?
And ſhun ſociety with Cæſar's friends?
Por. Ne'er may the Gods forſake the *friends* of Cæſar,
Since Brutus, more than all men, ſuch, by gratitude,
Merits protection from the Powers, who *love* it.———
Does Caſſius muſe in grots?
Brut. Why aſk'ſt thou that?
Por. Romans, who meditate the death of Cæſar,
And owe him not their *lives*, may mean no *murder*.

Brut.

Brut. Torbilius is a traitor;——Rome is *bought*,
And all thoſe guardian Gods, who lov'd her liberty,
Forſake her, and ſupport the cauſe of Cæſar.

Por. Rome bought?—and traitors?—If I watch thy look,
Rage, and deſpair, have dim'd thy eyes with anguiſh;
If I regard thy language, death dwells, *there*,
And, like a groan, at midnight, frights my fancy.
Stay I would aſk——

Brut. Aſk nothing:——'tis a time
For *action*:—keep thy *words* for idler moments. [*Is going.*

Por. [*Holding him.*] Hark! 'tis thy fate, that calls thee.

Brut. I *have* heard it.
Why wou'dſt thou thus reſtrain me!—*thoughtleſs* Portia!
Be wiſer.——All the lives of Rome's beſt friends
Demand me! *Their* the fate, that *calls* !—Away:—
Honour, and oaths, and death, and glory—*call* me.

Por. [*Still holding him.*] By Heaven! you go not, till
you firſt relieve me,
From this dark torment, which your words implant!
I'll know, *what* friends? *what* oaths?

Brut. Looſen thy hold:
Nay, if thou *ſtay'ſt* me, my unwilling ſtrength
Muſt break ungently from this ill-tim'd raſhneſs.
[*Forces himſelf away.*

Por. [*With a dagger.*] Turn, Brutus! turn—regard
this *ſilent* pleader!
If thou wou'dſt wiſh to ſpare the breaſt of Portia,
Dread the determin'd hand of Cato's *daughter*.

Brut. What wou'd thy madneſs hint? what means
that dagger?

Por. [*Pointing a dagger to her breaſt.*] Stir, not a ſtep.—
Thy firſt vain ſtart to ſeize me,
Plunges deliverance to my reſcued *heart*,
Which unconfiding Brutus loves to *torture*.

Brut. What would thy ſoul-diſtracting purpoſe frame?

Por. The bloody ſecret, thou conceal'ſt from Portia,
Thou ſhar'ſt, with every vulgar friend of Rome.

Brut.

Brut. [*Suſpended and amazed.*] Why wou'dſt thou bid
me *licenſe* future ſcorn,
To haunt my hated name?—Make me not *faithleſs*,
Leſt *ſongs* teach times to come, my heart's fond weakneſs;
That, to a *woman's* tongue, reſign'd a *ſecret*,
Which ſunk the world's laſt hope;—and gave up Rome.

Por. Where *ſleeps* the ſpirit of thy ſtern forefather?
Whoſe aweful firmneſs, ſculptur'd into life,
Frowning thro' *ſtone*, diſclaims degenerate Rome!
Teach him, ſome *God!* that CATO call'd *me* daughter.
Brutus believes me *light*, like *vulgar* woman!
Oh!—'twas for *this*, the ſorrowing ſhade reſought me;
Hinted futurity, through myſtic night,
And ſhew'd me, Brutus wou'd be mine—*no more*:
Find, in that dreadful warning, how HE judg'd:
Feel, what he thought of his own Portia's *daring*.
Truſting the fortitude, he gave—HE knew,
That Cato's daughter could not dread to *hear*
The worſt, that Cato's ſpirit dar'd to *tell*.

Brut. Generous, I know thou art;—but thou art *woman*;
Secrets of ſtate, and blood, o'erload your minds.

Por. 'Tis the falſe reaſoning of a ſex, that *wrongs* us:
Why ſhou'd a ſecret's weight o'erload the heart
Of Portia—yet, diſturb not that of Brutus?
All, thou can'ſt *wiſh* me, thou ſhalt find, I am:
All, thou can'ſt *ſuffer*, thou ſhalt feel, I *dare*.
Poorly, perhaps, thou think'ſt, the fear of *words*, [me!
And *pain*, and *ſwords*, and threat'ning *death*, might ſhake
—*Judge*,—by this willing blow—

[*Strikes the dagger into her left arm, which* Brutus, *advancing ſwiftly, ſnatches from her.*

—Off—off—by Heaven
Thy *failure* had transferr'd it to my *heart*.
Learn, from this bleeding *proof*, that,—when *I* ſhrink
From thoughts of *death*, I fear not for my *own*.

Brut. What has thy pride's ill-grounded raſhneſs done!
Oh! let me *mend* that error of thy hand:—
Bind up th' ungentle wound, and call *aid* to thee.

Por.

Por. Never — tho' death *divide* us !—Never—never
Shall Portia veil this mark, how Brutus *lov'd* her ;
Till, to redeem her *life*, he truſts her *virtue*.
Brut. *Periſh* the *pride* of ſuch a dear-bought fame,
As coſts my widow'd heart the *life* of Portia !
—— Read that dire *liſt*. [*Gives her the roll.*
Till my return *conceal* it :
And weigh thoſe mighty names, againſt ONE Cæſar.
Por. [*Permitting* Brutus *to bind her arm with his hand-*
Muſt Cæſar *die* ? *kerchief.*
Brut. ——'Twas *ſworn*.
Por. ——Did Brutus ſwear ?
Brut. He *did* ;—a dreadful oath!—aſk *what*, *hereafter*.
Bound to the *Gods*, thoſe angry ſouls of Rome,
Submitting to *my* hand, the public vengeance,
Kill Cæſar, inſtant,——or permit his *life*,
As Brutus warrants, or with-holds, the blow.
Por. Then, Cæſar *cannot* die.——He *pardon'd* Brutus.
Brut. Oh ! I cou'd tell thee wonders !---But the help,
I fly to ſend thee——and *their* forfeit lives,
Whoſe raſhneſs I muſt *warn*, permit no more.
Portia, *farewel* :——— If e'er we meet again,
I will *complain*, of thy impatient ardor,
And thou ſhalt juſtify the heart of Brutus. [*Exit haſtily.*

SCENE V. Portia, [*Alone.*]

Por. Live, Cæſar ! live and reign !--Tho' Cato's *blood*
Calls for revenge ;——and a whole people's rights
Uſurp'd, *abſolve* one bold aſſumer's fall ;——
The hand of Brutus muſt not *ſtain* Rome's juſtice ;
Nor, with deteſted murder, pay back *mercy*.
[*Peruſes the paper.*
Heaven! what confederate power! what names, leaſt likely,
Start from this dreadful roll, and threaten Cæſar !
———Wou'd I were ſtill a *ſtranger* to this ſecret !
Yet, that unknown,--*who* had *diſſuaded* Brutus ?
Is he diſſuaded ?——— let me *weigh* that queſtion.

Who

Who knows but, while I *ſpeak*, th' appointed hour
Impends!—It DOES!---Farewel, he ſaid---and *left* me!
Farewel!——— then added---*if* again we meet!
If!--Heaven! what meant that *if*?--'tis plain he *doubted*,
Whether we ever *were* to meet, or no!

SCENE VI. *To* Portia, *enter* Calphurnia, *with* Torbilius, Curio, *and ſoldiers.*

Cal. Never, unhappy Portia!--Far divided
Be innocence like *thine*, from guilt and murder!
Teach thy reluctant heart, to *give up* Brutus:
For never will thy eyes behold him more.
[Portia *fix'd in amazement, lets fall the roll, which* Torbilius *takes up, looks into, and offers to* Calphurnia.
Let not the hated ſcroll pollute my touch!
Fly with it, hence---bear it, with ſpeed to Cæſar:
Tell him, Torbilius! how the Gods have ſav'd him.
Tor. Happy, to miſs thy name, lov'd Brutus, here!
Well vers'd in Cæſar's *pity*, —glad, I go. [*Exit.*

SCENE VI. Portia, Calphurnia, *ſoldiers.*

Por. Oh!---
Cal. Wife of Brutus!
Por. ---Chill'd to *ſtone*, by horror,
Kindly, thou *wak'ſt* me, with that powerful name.
And my recov'ring breath implores thy mercy.
Cal. The *wife* of Cæſar ſpeaks: abſolve her juſtice:
Had the too dreadful danger been Calphurnia's,
Then, had my willing pity met thy prayer:
Sav'd, whom thou lov'ſt, and *loſt* a *third* vain mercy.
But thou haſt *heard* it! Brutus murders Cæſar!
--Yes, Caſſius!--bloody Caſſius!--I have wrong'd thee:
The foe but *wiſh'd* revenge:--the friend *reſolv'd* it.
Por. What does thy angry virtue mean to do?
Cal. --Blaſt his vow'd guilt, and force him to be ſafe,
Round, from the neighb'ring grot, ruſh Cæſar's friends,

Rapid for interception :---If they find him,
Try thy wish'd power: reclaim his will, from Cassius,
Whom if his fate has driven him, now, to *join*,
By all my fear for Cæsar's life —— he *dies!*

Por. *Detain* him, all ye Powers, who pity *woe!*
[*Enter* Curio *with other soldiers.*

Cur. Vain was our speed: —— There is an iron door,
That, opening to a vault, beneath these rocks,
Leads towards th' Emilian *baths:* ——'scap'd thro' that
Ere now, he rises in the shade of Rome. [passage,
[Portia *faints.*

Cal. [*To a soldier.*] See! the unhappy sufferer faints!--
support her: [*To* Curio, *in a lower voice.*
Mean time, while slow-returning *sense* forsakes
Her pitied ear, whose sighs my soul deplores,
Curio! —— The *blank commission*, Cæsar gave thee,
Claims, from *my* hand, a *name*, to guide thy duty:
[*Receives the table-book, from* Curio, *writes in, and returns it to him.*
Brutus becomes the *void*, with bloody grace;
Take it, and know thy hour.

Por. Bless'd, ye kind rocks:
Bless'd, be your guardian *echos!* that have swell'd
Death's murmurings to my ear:—If my strength fail not,
Home, on the wings of love, and fear, I'll fly:
Brutus shall *live*; and every God shall guard him.
[*Starts up, and goes out.*

Cal. Restrain her, Curio!—The preventive love,
This weeping virtue bears her sentenc'd Lord,
Wou'd warn him from the fate, his guilt compels.
[Curio *brings her back.*
Come —— guide th' afflicted trembler to *my* palace.

Por. No.--Kill me, *here:* ——Earth has no place, so fit
For Portia's death, as where her Brutus left her.
Art thou a *soldier?* hear me: ——All the brave
Have hearts to weep the woe, their hands have caus'd.
But *man* is *cruel.* —— Hear, Calphurnia! —— Thou
Art woman: —— Thou art Cæsar's tender *wife:*

Measure

Meaſure another's miſ'ry, by thy own.
Pauſe but, to think thyſelf the wife of Brutus;
'Twill plead *my* cauſe, and force thee to forgive.
Cal. Cou'd Portia ſo forgive the fought, ſworn, *death*
Of him, beyond whoſe life ſhe ſhuns to live?
Knock at thy own heart's door, and find mine juſtified!
Yet, bleeds my ſocial ſoul, and feels thy fate;
Poor, ſuffering *excellence!* and wretch, unguilty!
Por. Oh! I can never be a wretch, by *thee!*
I am thy *friend:* dwell on that thought, Calphurnia:
Even, when the CRADLE claim'd me, I was *thine:*
Sorrows, and pains, *muſt* come:—they come to all,
But, ſure! they ſhou'd not come from thoſe, we *love.*
Cal. They *cannot* come from love:--they *may* from juſtice.
Por. Let *foes* and *ſtrangers* be ſeverely *juſt:*
Friendſhip declines to puniſh, tho' 'tis wrong'd.
Cal. Think of the *preſent* hour.
Por. Think of the *paſt,*
When prattling childhood, yet, had learnt no power,
To liſp its little meanings into ſenſe;
Stammering our untaught inſtinct, ſide by ſide,
We wander'd, fearful of each other's *fall,*
And tripp'd, and ſmil'd, and totter'd, into *love.*
Scarce felt our *rip'ning* years a ſenſe of *woe:*
'Twas *foreign,* all —— for all, within, was peace.
While the divided city, round us glow'd
With cruel diſcord, and domeſtic rage;
Even, while our deareſt friends took different ſides,
And civil fury ſhook the partial ſoul;
We, ſtill ſuperior to a *nation*'s hate!
Smil'd on—confided, mix'd embracing minds;
And all *our* conteſt was—*which,* moſt, ſhou'd *love.*
Cal. Why wou'dſt thou, thus, recal paſt hours of joy?
Thoſe were the ſun-ſhine days of mirth and peace.
Now, 'tis all wint'ry darkneſs,—war, and blood!
Por. Brutus is *dear* to Portia.
Cal. —— Not *leſs* dear
Is godlike Cæſar, to Calphurnia's ſoul.

Por. If Brutus lives. . . . . .
Cal. Cæſar, he ſwore, muſt *die.*
Por. Cruel impatience! not to *hear* diſtreſs!
Cal. Patient I heard, till he confeſs'd it *ſworn:*
Heard, till he told thee, ——each dire murderer dar'd
Vow Cæſar *dead,* ——when Brutus wills it done.
Por. Brutus will *not.*
Cal. Away—'twas *ſworn,* 'twas SWORN.
Hear *that,* all-judging Heaven! and think, by *whom!*
Ingratitude's a guilt, that ſtartles nature,
And, with a fury's foulneſs, ſtains mankind!
Conſtrain her, Curio! force her gently, on.
Por. Stay, ſtay---I *will* be heard.---*Cruel* Calphurnia!
Cal. Alas! what wou'dſt thou ſay?
Por. Wou'd I cou'd tell!
Wou'd I were ſkill'd in woe, to touch thy pity!
Perhaps, I ſhou'd be *humbler?*——teach me, tell me.
Oh! I'm not ſtubborn. —— If the *Queen* of Cæſar,
Waits for the bended knee; and, looking *down*
To ſuppliant homage, taſtes the *flatterer*'s prayer:
See! Portia, proſtrate on the duſt, implores thee.
[*Kneels.*
See her ſoul agoniz'd,---and eaſe her terrors.
Grant him *but* life! ſpare his miſtaking virtue:
Baniſh him—far from Rome, and Power, and Cæſar.
To *unbous'd* Scythia's bleakeſt wilds, expoſe him:
Leave him one—one—*but one!* ſad, humble *ſhelter!*
His Portia's *aching* boſom!—never—ah?—never,
Will *ſhe* forſake him!—Off, ye glittering trifles!
[*Tears off her jewels.*
Ye *toys!* that help to blind unbleſs'd *diſtinction!*
Come—in their place --deſpair! affliction! penitence!
Be theſe *my* claims!—for theſe my Brutus ſhares in.
Shuddering, and bare, I'll trace th' unſheltry deſart,
Tread the bleak wilderneſs of *want,* unſighing,
Unwiſhing *comfort,* and content with *pain.*
Sleepleſs, myſelf, I'll watch his weary ſlumbers,
Feed his pale *fire,* hang o'er his heedleſs boſom:

Break

Break the rude *ſnow-drifts*, which the ſtorm blows round
And love him into *taſte* of ſafe diſtreſs. [him,
Cal. [*To the ſoldiers.*] Why will ye wound compaſſion,
by delay?
The ſorrows of a *ſuffering friend*, are torture,
None, but a *Devil*, at once can *cauſe*, and *bear*.
Relieve me, and, with tendereſt force, obey.
Por. [*To the ſoldiers.*] Reverence, ye ſlaves of power!
the race of Cato:
His unſubmitting ſoul ſurvives, in *mine*:
And ſwells againſt compulſion. [*Soldiers ſtep back.*
—— Dare not think,
I dread to *die*.—— But *know*, that Portia's death
Shall be the *choice* of Portia.
[*At a ſignal from* Calphurnia, *they ſeize her hands.*
—— Hope as ſoon,
To chain *impaſſive ſpirit!*—High diſdain,
Reſiſting *injuit*, at a thouſand doors,
Can let out life, and laugh at vain *reſtraint!*
I will, with ſtubborn pain, impriſon breath,
And burſt, indignant, from a world, that holds me.
I will, on ſtony pavements, hard and cold,
As deaf Calphurnia! daſh my dizzy brain:
I'll ſwallow *fire*:—rend, with impatient teeth,
This ſuffering fleſh, and plunge from hated *light*.
Unhand me, torturers! murderers! - *Help!* HELP!
I will extend my voice, if Brutus hears not,
Till the forgetful *Gods* are rous'd to *juſtice!*
Caſ. [*From the garden.*] Where *are* you? ſay! whence
flow'd that ſuffering ſound?
Por. Bleſt be th' attentive Powers!—'tis Caſſius calls.
Caſ. [*Without.*] Haſte, Cimber! join Marcellus; guard
the poſtern:
Croſs thoſe *arm'd ent'rers*, ere they reach the grove:
Fabius!—Fulgentius!
Cal. Save me, righteous Jove! [fortune
Cur. Scorn this new terror. Think, *whoſe* conquering
Summons a ſword, untaught to wrong his cauſe.
[*Exeunt* Curio, *and ſoldiers, drawing their ſwords.*

Cal. Heaven guard my Cæſar!
Por. Save my Brutus, Gods!
[*Claſhing of ſwords heard, without.*

SCENE VIII. Calphurnia, Portia, Caſſius.

Caſ. [*Entering.*] Guard well thoſe priſoners, while I—
Calphurnia, here! [*Starts.*
Nay *then*, ſome villain has betray'd our cauſe.
Por. Torbilius bears your *liſted names* to Cæſar,
And Brutus, if you ſave him not, muſt die.
Caſ. Freedom has friends, in heaven, too ſtrong for
No note of danger, ever more ſhall reach [Cæſar;
The tyrant's watchful ear:——Rome's vow'd *avengers*,
Now, at his entrance to the inſulted *Senate*,
Led on, by Liberty's returning Gods,
Shall, there, appeaſe them, with his offer'd *blood*.
[*Exit haſtily.*

SCENE IX.

Cal. [*Aſide.*] Hold firm, my frighted heart! 'tis but a
Suffering with dignity, diſgrace not glory: [moment!
Ev'n, in this dreadful turn, preſerve thy greatneſs:
Nor let thy trembling fears, alarm'd for Cæſar,
Loſe the *diſtinction*, due to Cæſar's *wife*.
[*Advances to* Portia.
Portia! a change, like this, might prompt *weak* minds,
To juſtify deſpair, and give up virtue.
But I, who truſt the Gods, with good men's ſafety,
Know, that, in Cæſar's *triumphs*, Heaven but guards
Th' aſſaulted greatneſs, which, itſelf, inſpir'd:
Riſing *againſt diſtreſs*, Calphurnia *ſmiles*
At traitors' threats, and *brightens* from eclipſe.
Fearleſs, to *perſevere* her Lord has taught her;
And, from meant evil, *force* unwilling *good*.
All, thou muſt hope, when Cæſar's cloudleſs ſtar
Meets, and ſhines through, and burns above this tempeſt;
Is---that *my* ſentence may remain ſuſpended,
Till the *Dictator*'s never-wearied mercy
Pours penitence, on the touch'd heart of Brutus.

Por.

Por. Slow bleſſings come too late, and bring new curſes:
This, but a moment paſt, had ſav'd us, both:
Now, Portia rules not, here:---'tis angry Caſſius:
The proud *conſpirators* poſſeſs my gates,
And Brutus, abſent, leaves me to their power.
He flew, to *warn* thoſe raſh, diſcover'd, Romans:
But haſty rage makes fruſtrate every care.
---Yet, *claim* whate'er my weakneſs *can*:---'tis *due*
To kind forgiveneſs of a friend's firſt fault:
To our paſt wiſhes, and our preſent fears:
For, ah! who knows, what dire events *impend*,
To blaſt eluded hope, and make *both* wretched?
---Come, to *my* chamber, let us ſadly move,
Penſive, from fear, and terrified for love:
There, let us mourn *ambition*'s reſtleſs rage,
And mutual mis'ry mutual help engage.

Cal. Warm, from my willing heart, I join that prayer,
Ne'er may ambition *waſte* a good man's care!
Vain are his hopes reluctant foes to *bleſs*:
And ſtill, the more his toils, his praiſe the leſs.

ACT V. SCENE I.

A court before the Capitol. Caſſius, Cimber, Cinna, Caſca.

Cim. SURE! never day *ran back*, like this, before!
So ſweet a dawn, ſo chang'd, at once to *tempeſt*.

Caſ. Chang'd, like the *fate* of Rome! above, 'tis *ſun-ſhine*;
Beneath, 'tis, all, due *darkneſs!*---*Senate*'s power
Shall brighten, and plebeian clouds ride *low*.
What haſty *footſtep* that?

Cim. 'Tis Decimus!

Enter Decimus.

Caſ. Alone! why comes not Brutus?

Dec. Near thy *houſe*
I met him haſt'ning to ſuſpend our meeting:
And urg'd the general cauſe, that claim'd his preſence.

Caſ. He ſhou'd not, yet, have heard of Portia's danger
Nor Cæſar's *warrant*, found.---
Dec. I told no more
Than that Torbilius, truſted with our *names*,
Lodg'd 'em, in Cæſar's hand.---So, what, before,
Was common *glory*, common *ſafety*, now,
Demanded inſtant:---therefore, here we met,
No more to part, till Rome, or Cæſar fall.
Caſ. Heard he that, firmly?
Dec. He's at hand, to join us.
Caſ. Then fate is *ours*: and this proud climber's *height*
Sinks to the level, where his name ſhall rot:
Mark, with what *eaſe* a tyrant's empire falls!
But yeſterday, this man's exalted praiſe
Trod on the *ſtars*: and Cæſar was a *God!*
To-day, the inſulting *foot* of Rome ſhall ſpurn him,
And mix his powerleſs aſhes with the duſt.
Cim. Hark! was not that a *ſcream?*
Caſ. Some prophet *raven*,
That, conſcious, on the *dome*'s high mould'ring roof,
Feels, and foretels, that Cæſar's ghoſt is *riſing*.
[*A noiſe heard, without, like the fall of a building.*
Cim. Some horrid *ruin*, that!
Caſ. Look out, good Decimus. [line
Dec. [*Looking out.*] Amazement! the long, venerable,
Of ſtatues, --- all Rome's old, and aweful *Chiefs*,
Lie fallen! and ſhapeleſs fragments load the floor!
[*Long, and loud thunder.*
Cim. Shou'd not a change, like this, that mixes palaces
With the up-heaving *center*, at the moment,
When our bold purpoſe *moves*, alarm our caution?
Caſ. Blow, till ye burſt, ye big-mouth'd *menacers!*
'Tis but a *breeze*, to hearts, inflam'd for glory.
Cim. Breeze!---in ſuch breezes, furies imp their wings.
Death! the ſtorm howls, as if the winds felt *envy*;
And wou'd *out-mouth* the thunder! ---Call ye *this*
A *breeze?* --- my feet want ſteadineſs!---the pavement,
Heav'd, in diſjointed ſurge, rolls looſe beneath me.

Caſ.

Caſ. By Heaven, 'tis glorious ruin!—round our heads
Fall Rome's imperial turrets:—earthquake, and tempeſt
Plow the mix'd elements: noiſes, far heard,
Live, in the winds, and *voice* the frantic air.
Day darkens: and the eye of Heaven ſeems *quench'd*.
Nature's wide-loos'ning fabric *ſhakes*, about us!
While *we*, with nerves of ſteel, preſs on to vengeance.
Oh! my brave friends! what future fame is ours!
What Cato cou'd not——what nor Aſia's aid,
Nor Pompey's ſailing *fleets* —— nor tawny Afric,
With all her ſun-defying ſwarms of war!
We few,—we, Roman few—— *have done* —— this day!

Cim. One way, or other, we ſhall *ſerve* the *Senate*:
Living, we ſet it *free*.—— And, if we *die*,
We teach it to *vote ſafe*;—and rail, in *private*.

Dec. See! what a penſive viſage Brutus brings!

Caſ. Save us! he looks, as if the tumbling *ſtatues*
Had cruſh'd him into *cowardice*!

SCENE II. Caſſius, Cimber, Decimus, Cinna, Caſca, Brutus.

Brut. Rome's *loſt*.

Cim. Then Cæſar, timely *warn'd*, has ſhun'd his *danger*.

Brut. No. The laſt thing, Cæſar will ſhun, is *danger*.
—— *Romans!* attend; and weep your country's fate:
I ſwore the death of Cæſar:—— curſe me not,
Ye *parent Gods!*——I thought it *due*, to Rome;
To law---to liberty---to *man*'s loſt rights;
To power's reſtraint, and a deliver'd world.
The hour---the dreadful hour, high Heaven! *I* nam'd!
Ev'n now, its, laſt dire moment calls on Brutus:
And now, ev'n *now*, Brutus is Cæſar's---SON!

[*Conſpirators all ſtart, and look down, in a ſpeechleſs aſtoniſhment.*

Brut. [*After a long pauſe.*] Servilia was in ſecret wedlock join'd——
And gave *herſelf*, and *me*——to Cæſar's love.

[*Conſpirators ſtill ſilent, fix'd, and amaz'd.*

Brut.

Brut. [*After another ſhort pauſe.*] Is there a Roman, ſo benumb'd of ſoul,
So firm, ſo paſſionleſs, ſo ſteel'd a *ſtoick!*
So nerv'd, beyond all vulgar ſtrength of *man!*
That he dares *urge* what Brutus ſwore to *do?*
Caſſius!——thou trembleſt.——
Caſ. Thou ſhalt tremble, *too*,
At the laſt counſel, I will live, to give thee.
Brut. Think, ere thou ſpeak'ſt—for *nature* is at ſtake;
And, liſt'ning, dreads th' advice, thou dar'ſt obtrude.
Caſ. Mark then——were Brutus of Plebeian mould,
Caſſius wou'd ſay, *ſerve on*: the tyrant ſon
Shou'd aid th' ambition of the tyrant father:
Rome had but mark'd *two* Cæſars for *one* fate.
But thou wert born her *friend*---thy name is Brutus,
And every Brutus breath'd, to *bleſs* mankind.
Thy changeleſs heart, inflexible for virtue,
Patriots a tyrant blood, tho' drawn from Cæſar. [thee.
Brut. Be dumb--be warn'd--'twere *impious* more to hear
Caſ. Nay mark—thou know'ſt what Catiline propos'd,
When, with a rebel hand, he ſhook his country.
Brut. I know it, Caſſius!
Caſ. On that lawleſs day,
When, deſp'rate, he preſum'd an act, like Cæſar's,
Suppoſe---all---wily, with a tyrant's *craft*,
This Catiline had claim'd thee, for his *ſon?*
Brut. Roman, thou wrong'ſt me.——
Caſ. Call me, then *no* Roman.
Brut. 'Twas a diſgraceful queſtion:---it imply'd,---
A Brutus might be *brib'd*, to wrong his country.
Caſ. Cæſar yet *lives*.——
Brut. Cæſar---and Catiline!
Gods!---what diſparities thou yok'ſt together!
——That Cæſar's *policy* not *feigns* me his,
Learn---I have proof, too plain.——Servilia ſpoke——
Spoke, from the ſhades of death, and own'd me Cæſar's
Caſ. Did her *ghoſt* tell this dream?

Brut.

Brut. The *dream* is *thine*,
Light Caſſius!——She confeſs'd it, in her letter.
Caſ. Cæſar has *arts*, beyond thy honeſt reaching——
But, let it paſs—— Cæſar is Cæſar, ſtill;——
Be Brutus cheated, by his tale, or no——
He no leſs guilty.——*Thou* no leſs a Roman.
Brut. If he's my *father*——
Caſ. Rome was ſtill his *mother*:
Where lives a bolder *parricide*, than Cæſar?
Brut. Away---my ſhrinking *ſoul* abhors thy purpoſe!
If I am Cæſar's *ſon*, Cæſar, to *me*,
Is faultleſs:---Nature made me *not* his judge.
And, till Rome's *Gods* redeem her, Brutus dares not.
Caſ. If *duty* binds—— thy *ſoul* was *ſon* to *Cato*;
He form'd thy truth, thy firmneſs, and thy virtue:
He taught thee to *revere* the Gods, thou ſwor'ſt by:
And feel the ſacred force, that firms an *oath*.
Brut. Periſh an oath—— *againſt* the birth, I *breathe* by!
Caſ. Thou but contribut'ſt *faith*, to help *deceit*!
Thou *art not*—*canſt not be*—the ſon of Cæſar:
I *know*, thou art not.
Brut. Caſſius!—*If I am!*
—What claſh of contradictions rends my ſoul!
Horror, and piety, *divide* my virtue,
Save Cæſar, all ye Gods!—but *ſave* Rome from him.
Caſ. Cæſar muſt not be ſafe,—or, Rome muſt fall.
Brut. Oh, Caſſius! partial *hatred* weighs unjuſtly:
Mercy ſo tempers his pretence to power,
That tyranny grows *ſafe*—and *looks*, like freedom.
Caſ. There is an aweful equity, that tow'rs
Above men's private paſſions:—tyrants *die*.—
And *ſons* of tyrants *want* their fathers' virtues:
Then bleeds a groaning ſtate! and *right*, and *rapine*,
Deſcend from heir to heir, for ten red ages,
Ere comes *another* Cæſar.—— Hence, 'tis *mercy*,
When one man dies, to ſave the blood of *nations*.
Brut. Dies! Caſſius!—by a SON;——Oh! righteous
Heaven!

Avert

Avert the impending *horror!*——Foe to *nature*,
Hint it no more —— or, Brutus turns the ſword,
Thou point'ſt at Cæſar's life—againſt thy *own*.
Caſ. I've *heard*, I am *too haſty*!—judge me, Romans,
You, who have ſeen the proof, that Heaven has lent me
Judge, to what *daring length*, this raſh, blind, man
Provokes his friend's impatience;—let that puniſh thee.
[*Gives him* Cæſar's *table book*
Read *there*, what envied rights thy birth derives
From Cæſar's blood—who, thus, cou'd ſentence *thine*.
Brut. [*Reading.*] "Wrong'd Cæſar claims redreſs
from Curio's ſword,
"Be this his *warrant* for diſpatching——Brutus."
——If this was Cæſar's, he believ'd me *not*
His *ſon* —— and I have treated *truth*, unkindly.
Caſ. Yes—thou haſt thank'd us well!—theſe friends!
——this Caſſius,
Who in the *grove*, from Cæſar's murderers, *ſav'd*
Doom'd Portia, thy belov'd! on death's dire verge;
And ſeizing Curio, found that warrant with him.
Brut. [*Reviewing the warraut.*] By Heav'n! 'tis Cæſar's
Caſ. 'Tis Cæſar's *heart*: [*hand.*
He judg'd the virtue, like his own *diſguiſe*:
So try'd corruption's power —— and held out *hope*
Of proud *ſucceſſion*: thou, if Cæſar's ſon,
Wert heir to Cæſar's empire. ——Failing, there,
He found one ſurer way: Marius, his uncle,
Had taught him, that *dead foes* reſiſt no longer.
Brut. Oh! it is all, too plain!—Come Caſſius! Cimber!
Decimus! Caſca! Cinna! — guardian friends!
Dwell in my boſom; ſhare the *joy*, you give:
Help me to thank the *Gods*, I'm once more Brutus?
Oh, I cou'd play the wanton — let looſe pleaſure;——
Laugh with the light: grow thoughtleſs, and *forget*
Rome's *danger*, for a *day* ——to cheriſh rapture!
Now, where's the *tempeſt?*—where's the *thunder*, now?
Loud let it rend, unfear'd, the arch of heaven:
'Tis ominous, no longer:——let it roar

De-

Delightful; Brutus is no ſon of Cæſar!
That! let it *ſwell* that ſound?—let it to earth,
Air —heaven, and loweſt *hell*'s loſt hope—*proclaim*,
That Roman Brutus is not SON to Cæſar.

Caſ. Thank the kind Gods, who ſav'd thee from ſuch horror.

Brut. Indulgent Heaven! were I like happier Romans,
Nature had now ſet free my patriot hand,
And Brutus were again, *but friend* to Cæſar.

Caſ. Time calls; ——the Senate waits us.

Brut. Stay, ſtay Caſſius!
I feel, I know not what, of nameleſs *doubting*,
Still, hov'ring dark, and ſlack'ning half my heart:
Oh! I am, *yet*, his ſon.——A *friend's* a father:
And *that* kind title has been, *ever*, Cæſar's.
[*Trumpet heard at a diſtance.*
Help Heaven! that trumpet calls him to his fate!
Fly, Decimus! prevent him: court him *hither:*
For the *laſt* time, I'll *preſs* my power, to *ſave* him.

Caſ. Think—how expos'd thou leav'ſt the friends of Rome!

Brut. If I betray you, may the Gods, I ſwore by,
Revenge your cauſe! and Rome renounce my name!

Caſ. On thy known truth, deſerted we depend:
Fix'd in belief, as if thoſe Gods, invok'd,
Stood pledges for thy purpoſe.—On to the Senate.
[*Exeunt all, except* Brutus.

Brut. [*Alone.*] Immortal taſkers of this fatal moment!
Free my entangled thoughts from gathering darkneſs,
And let Rome's ſafety flow from Cæſar's will!
—He comes—Oh, ſhade of Cato! guard my virtue.

SCENE III. Brutus, Cæſar, *and Lictors.*

Cæſar. [*To the Lictors.*] Retire, and wait within:—I wou'd be private. [*Exeunt Lictors.*
They tell me, thou haſt *ſecrets* to impart:

What

What are they?
Brut. ——May the ſoul of Rome inſpire me!
Cæſar. Wilt thou be ſon to Cæſar?
Brut. Cæſar's ſon,——
With *pride*---if Cæſar will be Son of Rome.---
Cæſar. Again?--preſumptous weakneſs! *know* thy duty
Whither wou'd popular pretenſion drive thee?
Brut. To *live* for liberty.---Or *die* for glory:
Cæſar. Thou mean'ſt a ſubſtance, but thou ſerv'ſt a name.
Brut. Rome's Senate held her freedom *more* than *name.*
Cæſar. Her Senate, rich and proud, oppreſs'd her people:
Her people, poor and headſtrong, ſpurn'd their yoke:
Hence roſe the new neceſſity, thou ſee'ſt not,
Of ſome unformal, ſelf-ſupporting *ſword,*
To cut ſedition boldly, to its root,
And rectifiy the crooked growth of empire.
This done---regenerate Rome grown *fit* for liberty,
Make it thy future gift:---and, therefore reign.
Now, 'tis ſedition's cloak---her trumpet's *call,*
That ſtate-diſturbers arm by.
Brut. Teach the *Senate*
Theſe found defects; and ſhape their wiſh'd redreſs:
Theirs is the right to *think,* for *councell'd* Rome.
Cæſar a *King,*———were all his virtues *ſtars,*
Rome's rights invading, makes his virtues---crimes.
Cæſar a *citizen,* protecting law,
Mix'd *with* the people, reigns the people's *God.*
Cæſar. What law? *what* people?----Government grew
And *violation* throve by law's protection: [*graſt,*
Power's tott'ring ballance ſhall be fix'd more *juſtly.*
Brut. What *ſingle* hand has right to fix *Rome*'s ſcale?
Cæſar. All men have *nature's right,* to bleſs their country.
Brut. Bleſſings are *inſults,* if by force, impos'd.
Cæſar. Then, *Heaven* that bleſs'd an *unconcurring world,*
Inſulted nature's freedom.
Brut. Give up the *ſtubborn;*
Truſt Rome to Rome; and freedom to the *Gods.*

Cæſar.

Cæſar. Errors that ſpring *from* pity, *call for* pity.
Brut. Pity thy country's *tears:* the groans of *millions!*
Cæſar. I *did*,---and, therefore, I aſſum'd *dominion.*
Brut. Dominion adds no fame to worth like Cæſar's:
Nature proclaim'd *thee nobleſt.*---Deeds, like thine,
Raiſe their performer's *rank*, till *King* ſounds poorly,
Time's purple plunderers, all, ſhall ſteal *thy name*,
And bid their proudeſt *title* be but ——Cæſar.
Cæſar. Surface, without a *depth!*—Falſe patriots, thus,
Buſied in *forms*, let ſlip the *ſoul* of purpoſe!
While with deluſive toil, thou plow'ſt for freedom,
Cheated by *factious ſeed*, thou *ſow'ſt* but *ſlavery.*
Againſt *one* fancied tyrant, blindly warm'd,
Thou, for a *hundred*, help'ſt to curſe thy country.
Brut. They curſe their country, who diſturb her *peace*;
And march their iron legions, o'er her boſom.
Cæſar. I ſhew'd thee, obſtinate, perſiſting rebel!
Peace had no *reſt* in Rome: —Her rights were *forms:*
Her Senate——a loud hive of inſect *Kings*;
That robb'd, and ſtung: and call'd oppreſſion—*privilege.*
Their lawful Sovereign Lord, the People——*ſlaves:*
Slaves in the mockery of imagin'd freedom!
See thy miſguiders rightly,——Truſt a father:
Affection *cannot* injure.—Thou art *pale!*
Look on me, Brutus!—What new dream diſturbs thee?
Brut. —*Wake* me, ſome Roman *God!*
Cæſar. ——Wake thee, to *feel*
Nature's loſt power.
Brut. —I feel it *all*, for Cæſar.
Cæſ. What wou'dſt thou teach my doubts to apprehend?
Brut. Vengeance and *death*, from Romans.
Cæſar. Vengeance is *mine:*
I won it in the field—to throw it back,—
And ſcorn'd the unmanly trophy:---*Death* is my friend:
Come, when it will—'tis but diſcharge from care:
'Tis but to 'ſcape falſe fears, and real ſorrows,
'Tis but to reſt from wrongs, and riſe to glory.

Brut.

Brut. There's not an unbought Roman in the Senate
But meditates thy murder.
Cæſar. Murderers, Brutus,
Kill their own character: ——— He, whom they ſtrike,
Dies to his memory's *profit*.---All, they can *dare*,
When they attempt like men,---like *man*, I'll meet.
Brut. But ſhou'd they *mean* ſome dark, diſhoneſt blow
Cæſar. Then *Heaven*, that hates the *baſe*, will ſtrike th
ſtrikers.
Brut. If thou *can'ſt fear*; fear *all*.
Cæſar. To ſay, I *cannot*,
Were light: ——— I *will not*, Brutus.---Feeble *fear*
Is a low, fruitleſs paſſion:---It unnerves
Reſiſtance; and obſcures prevention's *eye*:
Meets a ſhort blow, half-way;---and aids its weakneſs.
Life is not worth a fear.
Brut. Fear for mankind;
Fear, for the fate of Rome, that loſes Cæſar.
Cæſar. No more.---I know Rome's wants,---and reign,
to ſerve her.
Menace to me, means nothing: ſpare thy terrors;
Not ev'n threats of *Heaven* alarm the *juſt*:
Shou'd the contending *elements* break *looſe*,
And into formleſs atoms, *rend* the *world*,
The friend of truth *muſt fall*---but falls *unſhaken*.
Brut. Oh, Cæſar!---my full heart!---*farewel for ever.*
[*Turning away diſordered.*
Cæſar. Brutus in *tears!*—ſo mourn we griefs, we *make!*
Immortal Gods!—what *madneſs* blinds conceit!
He, who, unmov'd, reſiſts the voice of *nature*,
Melts, in imagin'd woes, and weeps for Rome.
Brut. No:—I but *die* for Rome.—I *weep* for Cæſar.
[*Exit in confuſion.*

SCENE

SCENE IV. Cæſar, Trinovantius.

Cæſar. What, my bold Briton!--Welcome, Trinovantius,
I love thy country's virtues.
Trin. Cæſar, hail!
When thy friends *fear*—and e'en a Brutus *weeps*,
May the *Gods* guard thee, as thy *ſoldier* wou'd!
Cæſar. Long has thy brave and faithful cohort ſerv'd me;
What are their *wants?*—teach Cæſar how to pleaſe thee.
Trin. No Briton waſtes a prayer upon *himſelf*,
When his *friend*'s life's in *danger*.
Cæſar. What then wou'dſt thou?
Trin. The *Senate* met, and full of ſeeming faith,
Wait thy wiſh'd preſence;—Rome's rais'd throne invites thee:
Thy plain, well-meaning friends, the populace,
Bear offer'd *incenſe*, thro' the ſtreets of Rome,
And pay their willing worſhip to thy *ſtatues*.
All the pleas'd city ſmiles.—Yet, cou'd I move thee;
Cou'd thy old ſoldier's firſt-felt *fear* perſuade;——
Cæſar ſhou'd *ſhun* the ſad-preſaging hour,
And bid this *diadem* attend his *leiſure*.
Cæſar. I thought the ſons of Thames had felt no *fears*.
Trin. No fears they feel from earth's uniting anger:
But, when *Heaven* frowns, 'tis impious *not* to tremble.
All nature, thro' her works, ſeems, now *convuls'd*:
—— I met the pallid *Veſtals* wildly ſcreaming:
Fled, from th' *extinguiſh'd* fire, robeleſs, and *bare*:
And blind amidſt the duſt of *crumbling towers*;
Shook from their dark'ned ſummits!---Doors of *ſepulchres*
Untouch'd, fly open: and from ſilent *urns*,
Where ſlept in monumental reſt, the bones
Of Rome's firſt founders, ſlow-aſcending *ſhades*
Catch form;—— and hov'ring, in the *quicken'd* air,
View ſome *ſad fate*, they want the power to *tell*:
And ſhrink, and ſtart——and fly the ſick'ning ſun.

——— Such boding *ſigns* fore-note impending *fate:*
And Heaven, from whom Kings hold, poſtpones thy claim.
Cæſar. Fie Trinovantius!---'Tis too bold for *man!*
'Tis *inſolence*, to liſt th' eternal *Gods:*
Make nature *buſy*, and *unhinge* a *world:*
To lengthen, or cut ſhort, a mortal's moment.
Th' all-ruling Powers have *fix'd* our deſtin'd ſpace;
And we, too weak to *ſhun*, muſt *wait* their will.
Trin. 'Tis whiſper'd,—ſome great names *unite* for miſ-[chief.
Cæſar. *Ambition*, born for *conteſt*, owes contempt
To threat'ners.———
Trin. Yes.——But, cautious *note* of treaſon,
Timely, and oft, averts the traitor's purpoſe.
Cæſar. To live in daily *dread*, is daily *dying:*
'Tis *worſe* than death:——'tis ſickneſs *never cur'd!*
Trin. Suffer my Britons to ſurround the temple,
And truſt malicious *Senates* to their eye.
Cæſar. Who awes his enemy, ſubmits to fear him.
—Stay, my good friend, thou com'ſt no farther on.
Trin. I leave thee, Cæſar! with a ſtrange *regret!*
For my fore-boding heart is fill'd with terror.
Cæſar. Be comforted.—Thou over-rat'ſt my danger.
Three hundred *new Patricians* ſwell the *Senate:*
All, mine, for their own ſafety:—half the *old*,---
Names, like the Julian, fam'd ere Rome *was* Rome!
Converts to ſlow-found truth, embrace her warmly,
Theſe, nobly owning, teach the *reſt* to *own*,
When error is *diſgrace*, retraction's *virtue.*
What apprehend'ſt thou, then, from that ſmall remnant,
Whoſe weakneſs is too *wiſe*, to dare their wiſh?
Trin. O Pallas! Pallas!---Guide of martial Cæſar!
How grew the maſter-ſoldier of the world
Unmindful, what *ſucceſs*, in deeds of blood,
Crowns *unexpected* raſhneſs!—If we but *think*
Th' attempt impoſſible, we *make* it ſafe.
——Had (but that Heaven forbids) this unfear'd *few*,
Weak as they ſeem, dar'd in full *Senate* ſtrike,
Firm, and combin'd, at Cæſar's ſacred *life*;

His

His friends, th' aſtoniſh'd *many* —— powerleſs, unnerv'd,
In gaze of helpleſs horror, had ſat paſſive;
Each doubting each —— a *foe*; till fate had reach'd thee,
And, while prevention paus'd, preſumption triumph'd.
Cæſar. Briton! thy heart is manly: and thy mind
Adorn'd with every gift of faith, and wiſdom!
Act, as thy doubts inſpire thee. —— Since *thou* fear'ſt,
'Tis ſtrange, that I, too, cannot! —— Yet, beware,
Thou call'ſt no aid of *arms*: —— civil *to* civil,
And but to *martial* military. —— Hear'ſt thou
[*Loud cry of a* Cæſar —— *a* Cæſar!
Yon ſhouting ſwarm, that ſhakes Rome's echoing *domes!*
Lead thoſe *loud voters*, from the o'ercrowded ſtreets,
To where their cry may reach the *Senate*'s ear:
'Twill caution guilt, perhaps! and aid reſolves.
Trin. Thanks to the Gods, thy friends! who led thee once,
To charm our fraudleſs *iſle*—by *them* inſpir'd,
One grateful Briton ſaves the Roman *foul!*
[Cæſar *and* Trinovantius *turn to go off, on oppoſite ſides.*

SCENE V. Torbilius *entering haſtily.* Trinovantius *meeting him.*

Bleſs thy quick ſtep! com'ſt thou to hold back Cæſar?
Tor. Brave Iſlander, I *do.*
Trin. Emperor! Dictator!
Cæſar. Huſh thy too buſy terrors.
Trin. [*Aſide.*] Hold him, ſweet Roman!
Tun'd *eloquence* is thine: tell him ſome *tale*,
No matter on what ſubject, make it but *long.*
[*Exit haſtily.*
Cæſar. [*Seeing* Tor.] *Why* art thou here?—did Brutus vote for murder?
Tor. Shun the met *Senate*:—*all* mean murder *there:*
Cæſar. All cannot.—Thou defam'ſt too *broadly*:—who?
Tor. The Patriot faction.
Cæſar. Thou haſt *yok'd* ideas,

Which reaſon muſt *divide*.—Patriot and faction,
Like *oil* on *waters*, mix when ſtrongly *ſhaken*:
But never can *unite*——disjoin'd by nature!
Tor. *Patriots* can *envy*.—And who envies——*hates*.
Cæſar. Let 'em hate on.—In men who love their country,
Envy but quickens virtue.
Tor. This black *liſt*
Contains, O Cæſar, thirty traitors' names:
Traitors, by great Calphurnia's care detected:
Traitors, who under *friendſhip*'s fair diſguiſe,
Have with confederate malice, *ſworn* thy murder.
Cæſar. [*Taking the roll.*] Did my Calphurnia ſend thee?
Tor. Cæſar, ſhe *did*.
Cæſar. My *friends*' names, ſay'ſt thou, in this roll of *traitors?*
Tor. All thy moſt *truſted*, moſt *diſtinguiſhed* friends.
Cæſar. [*After a pauſe, returning the roll, unopened.*] Take *back* thy bloody liſt, and *hide* man's baſeneſs:
Where *truſt* is tainted by ſuch dire *deceit*,
Life is not *worth preſerving*.
Tor. Lov'd Calphurnia
Demands it:——for her ſake, repreſs thy ſcorn.——
Stay but to go well-*guarded*.
Cæſar. Againſt *enemies*,
Cæſar ſuffices for the *guard* of Cæſar:——
But, againſt friends, diſtruſt were *violation*.
Tor. [*Holding his robe.*] Stay, but to be *convinc'd*—ill-fated Cæſar!
Cæſar. I *will not* be convinced, that *faith* is weakneſs.
Who wou'd take pains to *loſe* that peace, he feels,
From generous confidence in human virtues?
If there *are* wretches, who, oblig'd, *betray*,
'Tis comfort *not to know* 'em. [*Exit* Cæſar.

SCENE VI. *To* Torbilius, *enter* Trinovantius, *and two* Roman *Officers*.

Tor. Oh! farewel,
Rome's fame!——her *evil Genius* has prevail'd:

And

And Cæſar's *death* ſhall doom declining empire. [*Exit.*
Trin. [*Repelling a crowd of* Plebeians.] Stand back, keep
diſtance; reverence the ſitting Senate:
Whom will you crown your *King?*
Pleb. A Cæſar! a Cæſar.
Trin. Bleſs your concurring joy! ye grateful people!
Cæſar is yours——and you are juſtly Cæſar's!
Crown him with rapture. For were Cæſar *King*,
Rome had *no tyrants:* All your lordly *patrons*,
Stripp'd of oppreſſive power, ſhall call you *brothers*.
Office, with equal eye, ſhall ſearch for *ſkill*,
And liberty become the *poor man's* claim.
There *are*, who juſtly dread in Cæſar's crown,
His love of the *unhappy:*---dread his *pity*.
He will not ſee the groaning debtor *ſold*,
To feed the rich man's luxury.---No tears
Of ſtarving *want*;---no iron hand of law;
No ſlaves to fellow-ſubjects, ſhall make *ſad*
The ſtreets of *happy* Rome—if Cæſar reigns.
[*A cry from within*---Liberty! liberty! liberty!—
Hark! in that cry, aroſe no voice of *joy!*
By Heaven, they murder Cæſar! guard this door,
Good Romans! Fulvius! Ætius! your try'd ſwords,
And mine, dare *enter*.—Follow *me*, and ſave him.
[*As they are going off, with their ſwords drawn;*
they are ſtopt by Antony, *who enters diſordered.*
Ant. Spare your meant aid——alas! it comes too late:
Murder, with all Briareus' hundred hands,
Pierc'd the *world's ſoul*—and conqueſt *is no more.*
Trin. Curſes conſume their names; what villain hand!—
Ant. Caſca ſtruck firſt—Cæſar, up-ſtarting ſeiz'd
The aſſaſſin ſteel—back plung'd it home,—and cry'd,
No---villain Caſca! No---thus, thy own *poinard*
Corrects thy feeble purpoſe:—*die*—*die*—traitor!
Down to the expecting ſhades—ſay Cæſar ſent thee.
There, preſs'd beneath a ſtorm of wounds, at once,
He ſtood, and frown'd, and bled, on every ſide:
Moving at laſt, majeſtic—the red hand
Of miſcreant Brutus met his radiant eye.

Then *thus*:—*All*, cruel murderers? what! *all?*
And thou! my SON! my BRUTUS! nay then, to *conquer*,
Were to perpetuate *pain*:—and death grows *joy*.
Speaking, he ſunk:—ſoft, o'er his manly form,
Smooth'd his diſorder'd robe-- and, ſighleſs, *died*.
[*Cry again, from within*, Liberty! liberty!
Trin. Edge this true ſword, kind Heaven! they dare *deſcend*.
[*Advancing to meet the conſpirators, he is held back by* Marc Antony.

SCENE VII. Trinovantius, Antony, *and Officers*, Caſſius, Decimus, Cinna, Marcellus, *with bloody daggers*.

Caſ. 'Tis paſt—ambition bleeds; and Rome is *free*:
Hail! Lords of Rome reviv'd! nation of *Princes*.
Now, once more, *maſters* of a world, you won!
Dare *vindicate* the hands, that *broke* your chain.
Trin. [*Struggling againſt* Antony.] Cowards! cold-hearted *cowards!* -- You, who thus
Fear to *revenge*—'tis you, have *murder'd* Cæſar.
Ant. No, Trinovantius.—Truſt the Gods and Rome
With Cæſar's vengeance!—Careful thro' the crowd,
I ſeek, but find not Brutus.
Cim. [*Enters wounded.*]—Who nam'd Brutus?
Caſ. 'Twas Antony.---Come forward, valiant Cimber!
Where haſt thou left our Chief?
Cim. Unhappy Brutus!
Struck, by the words and look of dying Cæſar,
He bow'd to *weep* upon the wound, he *made*:
When, from a gallery, burſting in *above*,
Held 'twixt the *frantic Veſtals*, there appear'd
Cato's yet living ſiſter —— loſt Servilia!
See! cry'd the breathleſs trembler,--*traitor! parricide!*
Call'd by *thy* crimes, in vain, from a retreat,
Where *hid* (not *dead*) I ſhun'd a hated world,
Thy mother's blaſted eye, —— fell monſter! murderer!
Finds thee, too late; and every God ſhall curſe thee;
She *ſcream'd* and ſunk, amidſt the Veſtal train.
Brutus! all wild, as with a *fury*'s horror,

Gaz'd

Gaz'd up, down, round——wrung his clos'd hands—
ran — ſtopt,
Return'd —— then, with a burſting ſigh, reſum'd
Compoſure: kneel'd, and kiſs'd the robe of Cæſar?
But ſnatching a fall'n *dagger*, roſe diſtracted,
And cry'd—"Take, take me vengeance! Rome is *free:*
"But Brutus, in her cauſe, has *ſtabb'd a father!*"
Near, as he aim'd the meditated blow,
I broke its erring force —— and on this arm,
Receiv'd the pointed miſchief. ——So, *prevented,*
I left him, 'midſt a guard of weeping Romans.
Ant. Well may he *weep!* — but when he *reads* a charge,
The murder'd father left the murdering ſon;
What will he *then* endure? —— what *cave* has earth,
So deep, ſo dark, to hide him from *himſelf!*
When he ſhall ſee, that, to his bloody hand;
Cæſar conſign'd the power to *fix* Rome's *liberty.*
Caſ. Thou ſpeak'ſt in myſtery, Marc Antony!
Ant. Move to the *Forum,*—in the face of *Rome,*
I ſhall unfold the *will* of Rome's loſt guardian.
Caſ. Cou'd artful Antony, prove Cæſar *wrong'd:*
Caſſius wou'd then *confeſs,* he was *too haſty*
Ant. Traitor! thy willing *envy* lov'd the error;
And thou ſhalt expiate—far, as loweſt *vice.*
Too weakly can attone for murdered *virtue,*
This hour's deteſted guilt, by *death* and *infamy.*
Trin. Summon the people:---I'll revenge this murder;
Then, mourn loſt Rome——and guard Britannia's liberty.
[*Exeunt* Roman Officers *and* Plebeians,
Ant. [*Coming forward.*] Had but ambition *eyes* to look
thro' time,
'Twou'd ſee its fruitleſs toil, and ſhun to climb:
Fondneſs of noiſe, and crowds and courts would ceaſe,
And man's whole happineſs be plac'd in *peace.*
Safe Liberty wou'd guard each patriot *throne,*
And *tyrant* be, henceforth, a name *unknown:*
All fruit of power is *pain:* and what is *fame?*
When ev'n a Cæſar's glory ſtains his name.

THE
INSOLVENT:
OR,
FILIAL PIETY.
A
TRAGEDY.

ACTED AT THE

THEATRE in the HAY-MARKET.

PREFACE.

ABOVE thirty years ago, Mr. WILKS (then one of the Patentees of the Theatre Royal) gave an old manuſcript play, call'd, *The Guiltleſs Adultreſs*; *or*, *Judge in his own Cauſe*, to Mr. THEOPHILUS CIBBER, who was then manager of what us'd to be call'd *the ſummer company*. This company conſiſted, in general, of the junior part of the performers; who during the vacation time, commonly acted twice, or thrice, a week. As they play'd on ſhares (divided in proportion according to their ſeveral ſalaries ſtipulated in the winter) their endeavours to pleaſe the town generally produced 'em double pay on thoſe nights; ſometimes more.

This kept ſome of 'em from ſtrolling into the country, for the ſummer ſeaſon; it added to their income, and gave 'em an opportunity of getting forward in their buſineſs, in a more regular manner, than has been practis'd of late years. It had its effect: performers then try'd their force in characters, in the ſummer; and became, by practice therein, gradually acquainted with their buſineſs, and the town with them. Nor was every one ſuppos'd to be equal at their ſetting out, to the moſt capital characters of the drama.

But to return to the Play.--By the hand, and the long time it had been in poſſeſſion of the Managers, it was ſuppos'd to have been one of Sir WILLIAM D'AVENANT's (formerly a Patentee) and, by the opening of the piece, palpably was founded on a play of MASSENGER's, call'd, *The Fatal Dowry*---(this laſt piece has often been enquired after in vain)---Mr. WILKS recommended it to Mr. CIBBER to be got up in the ſummer, with ſome alteration.—

ration.---It lay by ſome time.---In the year 1733, it was intended for the ſtage in the ſummer---But the performers were then ſhut out of the Theatre, by the then Patentees of Drury-Lane.—

In the following year, when the principal Comedians of that time returned from the theatre in the Hay-Market, and play'd under the direction of Mr. FLEETWOOD, it was propos'd again to have a ſummer company; as the uſe of it, both to the actors and managers, had been experienced. Many light pieces were then reviv'd, and ſeveral new petit pieces brought on the ſtage; ſuch as, *The Devil to pay*, *The Mock Doctor*, &c. which proved afterwards laſting entertainments in the winter ſeaſon.

'Twas in *The Devil to Pay*, in a ſummer ſeaſon, Mrs. CLIVE (then Miſs RAFTOR) firſt ſurpriz'd a delighted audience with a proof of her extraordinary genius, in the character of NELL. Her ſpirited ſimplicity, and ſtrong natural humour, carried her thro' the part with an aſtoniſhing variety, and propriety. She ſhew'd herſelf an excellent original.—She has had many followers, ſome imitators; and, 'tis but juſtice to add, no equal. She then promis'd to be, what ſhe has ſince prov'd, one of the firſt performers of the ſtage: and, when judiciouſly examined in the general various caſt of parts ſhe acts, 'tis imagined ſhe will be allow'd not to be inferior to any performer of her time.

Well, this is digreſſion on digreſſion—(pardon it, reader, and let it paſs)—In 1734, a ſummer company was again propos'd. They play'd once the play of George Barnwell, to a very great houſe. The Manager (jealous leſt the company ſhou'd get too much; order'd the farther acting to be ſtopp'd. It was judg'd, indeed, the jealouſy of ſome actors (who were not concern'd in the ſummer) gave this advice——ſo the affair dropp'd——and there has been no ſummer playing ſince.

But, to return to our Play.--On a reviſal, it was judg'd to want ſome alterations--Accordingly, Mr. CIBBER requeſted his kind friend the late Mr. HILL (who was never happier

happier than when he had an opportunity to do a friendly office) to correct it---How much he was taken with the play, will appear on a perusal of some letters of his relative thereto, (publish'd in his collection) and sent to Mr. THEOPHILUS CIBBER, about the year 1746.——Let it suffice here, to add —— Mr. HILL almost new wrote the whole; and the last act was entirely his, in conduct, sentiment, diction, &c.

It was brought on the stage at the Theatre in the Hay-Market early this year, 1758——When his Grace the Duke of DEVONSHIRE humanely consider'd the unfortunate, extraordinary condition of a Comedian (who has had more frequent opportunities of happily entertaining the town) and gave him liberty to try his fortune, awhile, at the Little Theatre in the Hay-Market.

PRO-

PROLOGUE.

Spoken by Mr. CIBBER.

(Then in mourning for his Father.)

OUR ſcenes, to-night, would Nature's pangs impart ;
True filial piety ſhould reach the heart.
I feel it now ——— That thought the tear ſhall claim ;
To merit ſacred, and immortal fame.
Now ſleeps the honour'd duſt which gave me birth ;
Recent in death, but newly lodg'd in earth :
Forgive the heart-felt grief ! the filial lay !
The public tear might drop o'er CIBBER's *clay !*
His comic force —— for more than half an age!
His well wrote moral ſcene, his manly page,
Your fathers fathers pleas'd —— His ſcenes ſhall live ;
And, to your childrens children, equal pleaſure give.
Forgive the filial dews that thus diſtil ———
'Tis from the heart they flow, and not from ſkill :
By nature mov'd, your patience thus I try ;
Art would but give my ſuff'ring ſoul the lie.
Now for the father's ſake, the ſon endure ;
Let his paternal worth your Smile ſecure.
Let his rich merit my poor wants atone ;
His high deſert I plead ——— boaſt none my own.
Let then this tribute, to the father due ;
This public tribute, be approv'd by you.
Whatever faults may thro' this piece be ſhewn,
No living bard can now thoſe faults atone,
While ſuch you, tranſient, mark ——— let mercy ſpare,
Such parts as you may think ſome merit ſhare.
Where judgment wakes, let candour intervene,
Mark out the failings with that golden mean,
Nor for a ſingle ſentence damn a ſcene.
To our young actors too your ſmiles extend ;
Youth claims indulgence ——— as want claims a friend :
Whate'er their flatt'ring hopes, their fears are great,
Which your applauſe alone can diſſipate :
And, 'tis a maxim with the truly brave,
They triumph moſt, who generouſly ſave.

PRO-

PROLOGUE.

By the late AARON HILL, Esq;

POOR (at first op'ning) seems the plot we chuse:
But no felt indigence unsir'd the Muse.
Insolvent pris'ner —— bears no aweful sound!
Yet—hope strong buildings —— on that humble ground.
Debtor and creditor th' account begin:
But then comes joy —— wife —— mis'ry —— death and sin!
While, from these varying lights, fierce fires we raise,
Lend but attention —— and your tears shall praise.
Few are the public stains, that tinge the fame
Of this brave, rich, good-natur'd nation's name:
Yet, one there is —— from time's long licence, grown ——
That blots out pity—and turns flesh to stone.
'Tis—the deaf rage, that (where hard wants oppress)
Doubles th' insolvent suff'rer's dire distress.
Stung by this wasp, past friendships lose their weight;
Warp'd estimation wears a face like hate:
Suspended mercy bids affliction smart;
And, in a scale of flint, immures her heart.
Self —— yet, unreach'd by woe — made proud, by gain,
Blind to disaster—and insulting pain;
In ease, short-sighted —— hugs her lot, secure ——
And marks no diff'rence—'twixt the base, and poor,
Flings from calamity, turns short on grief,
And, to the prison's grave, refers relief.
So—for awhile—triumphantly severe!
Tow'rs the bid insult—and disdains to hear.
At last comes disappointment home—Then, starts
Touch'd sense—and wonders at mens cruel hearts!
Then (self still upmost) the rous'd sleeper shakes;
And insolently hopes—compassion wake!
But scorn close waits upon the scorner's heel;
And he, that shunn'd to hear—vouchsafes to feel.
Too late, he feels!—The eye, that wakes for all,
Fore-doom'd his anguish—and enjoys his fall;

Points,

Points, to his trembling view, that wiſe man's ſchool--
That God-given law---th' all-temp'ring golden rule:
Bids him thank bitterneſs, for due deſpair;
And, ſince he cou'd not pity, learn to bear.
From our laſt age's plays exemplar aim,
Preſent and paſt; we find too much the ſame:
Stern, unrelenting int'reſt's partial will
Reign'd then reſiſtleſs--and it reigns ſo ſtill.
How happy were th' effect--cou'd miſeries, here,
From pride's correction (mourn'd by pity's tear)
Teach the dry rock to melt, in pain-touch'd flow;
And eaſe th' unhoping crowds, that ſigh, in woe!

Dramatis Perſonæ.

MEN.

Old AUMELE, firſt Preſident of Burgundy.
Young AUMELE, in love with AMELIA.
Count CHALONS, Son of the Marſhal of Burgundy.
LA FOY, his Friend, a rough Soldier.
VALDORE, Father to AMELIA, and Predeceſſor to old AUMELE.
BELGARD, Couſin, and Dependent on AUMELE.
LE FER, ſervant to VALDORE.

WOMEN.

AMELIA, Daughter to VALDORE.
FLORELLA, her Maid.

Preſidents, Advocates, Clients, Goaler, &c.

SCENE, The Capital of Burgundy.

THE INSOLVENT: OR, FILIAL PIETY.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A court ſitting: Judges on the bench: Lawyers with clients at the bar.

2d PRESIDENT.

HAIL! reverend judges! May this meeting prove
Proſperous to us, and end in general good.

Old Aum. Speak to the point, the cauſe of this our ſummons.

2d Preſ. We meet, my Lords, reluctant to diſpoſe
The aweful place, and high important power
Of firſt in council of this ſacred court:
This, to our grief, the reverend wiſe Valdore
Reſolves, grown weary of the ponderous charge,
Here to give up this day.

Val. Too heavy truſt! it preſs'd my conſcious weakneſs;
Yet, not for private eaſe wou'd I reſign it,
But, bow'd beneath the burden, ſinking age
Implores your kind releaſe from care too weighty.

Old Aum. Still to preſide, we all wou'd gladly move you.

Val. It muſt not be; nor can your Lordſhips goodnes
Deny my poor remains of time the refuge
Of ſome ſhort ſpace, for penitence and prayer:
Let me employ my laſt low ebb of breath,
In cares for future life —— and learn to die.——
I pray the court to eaſe me of this burden.

3d Preſ. The court entreats your Lordſhip wou'd be pleas'd
To guide the general voice—The choice you make
Will be, by all confirm'd.

Val. The Lord Aumele.

3d Preſ. [*After a pauſe—the Preſidents bow.*] The court allows it——
Be it ſo decreed.

Val. But here are ſuitors, and their cauſe may carry
More weight, than forms like thoſe attending on
This choice —— diſpatch them firſt.

3d Preſ. Pleaſe you, my Lord Aumele, to take the chair;
We wou'd begin.

Old Aum. [*Seats himſelf.*] Speak, Advocate; we hear.

Adv. The cauſe my client offers to your Lordſhips
Is in itſelf ſo pleaful, that it needs
Nor eloquence, nor favour, in this court.
The guilty, when condemn'd, confeſs your juſtice;
Our cauſe ſhall claim your mercy.

Old Aum. Speak to the cauſe. [ſtate

Adv. 'Tis the cauſe ſpeaks.—Great Burgundy's bleſt
Had once--But ſtop. [*Pauſe.*] To ſay that her dead Marſhal
The father of this brave young Lord, my client,
[*Pointing to* Chalons.
Honour'd his country's name by far-fam'd ſervice,
Wou'd tax aſſertion, by a doubt undue.
You all, my Lords, remember that ſo well,
'Twere injury to prove it. —— In his life,
He grew indebted to theſe thrifty men; [*Pointing to the*
And failing, by repeated loſs in war, *Creditors.*
Of power to free himſelf from ſuch low claims;
I weep to tell it —— But, his country ſav'd,
Saw him impriſon'd —— and in priſon die.

It

It is a maxim in our law——that debts
Die, with insolvent debtors: but these men,
Length'ning malicious pain beyond life's bounds,
From death snatch bodies for new chains.
They dare deny him ev'n his funeral rites;
Rites, not by heathens held from wretched slaves.
We humbly, therefore, pray your Lordships pity,
Setting aside their more than barbarous insult,
To disappoint revenge——That woe may rest.

Old Aum. How long have you, Sir, practis'd in this court?

Adv. Full twenty years, my Lord.

Old Aum. How!—Twenty years?——
So bold an ignorance had half convinc'd me,
Your judgment scarce cou'd number twenty days.

Adv. I hope in such a cause as this, my Lord—

Old Aum. How dare you thus presume to urge the court
(Law's sacred guardian) to dispense with law?
Terror of bankrupts gave this statute birth.
Go home, and with more care peruse known acts;
And then make motions.

Adv. I submit—but mourn. [*Exit* Advocate.

La Foy. Can then your Lordships think, that he whose
Supports a friendless cause (condemn'd by law [plea
Tho' justice owns it) errs by honest zeal?

Old Aum. Prodigious arrogance!

La Foy. Is reason such!
Or is it here a maxim, that the pleader
Reads on the Judge's face his cause's worth?

3d Pres. Too bold La Foy--pay reverence where 'tis due.

La Foy. Or was the power you act by, trusted with you
To qualify no rigour in the laws;
But doubling every wound that mercy feels,
Treat pity like a guilt?——Oh, shame of state!——
This strictness of your sour decree, that grinds
The debtor's dying bones, to feast the spight
Of a still greedy creditor, who gapes
For payment from the grave's unclosing dust;
Condemns misfortune, to let crimes go free.

Old Aum. You, Sir, that prate thus saucily, what are you?

La Foy. I am a ſoldier—If you know not me,
Ne'er has yourſelf been known in honour's courts.
Beneath the banner of the dead Chalons,
Long witneſs of his deeds, I ſerv'd, in blood;
Sav'd your ungrateful head, and lent it means
To lift that haughty brow — my partial judge.

3d Preſ. Forbear, bold man--'Tis raſhneſs paſt ſupport.

La Foy. Let thoſe proud angry eyes flaſh lightning round,
Each object they can meet feels dumb diſdain;
Shrinks from their blood-ſhot beams, and frowns within:
Long had they been, ere this, by ſome fierce hand
Torn from their taſteleſs orbs; or, ſav'd for ſhame,
Had, juſtly weeping, ſerv'd ſome needy foe;
Had I not worn a ſword, and us'd it better,
Than, in diſgrace of law, thou doſt thy tongue.

Old Aum. If inſolence, like this, paſs here unpuniſh'd--

La Foy. Yet I--who in my country's balanc'd ſcale
Out-weigh'd a thouſand tame proud logs like thee,
Confeſs myſelf unworthy name, compar'd
With the leaſt claim of my dead General's worth.
Then from his numberleſs, long line of glories,
Make choice of any one, e'en of the meaneſt;
Whether againſt that wily fox of France,
The politic Lewis, or more deſperate Swiſs;
Still ſhalt thou find it poize, beyond all tricks,
Craft, views, or acts, that ever gown-men thought of.

Old Aum. Away — to priſon with him.

La Foy. Off. [*To the guards.*] If curſes,
Urg'd in the bitterneſs of aching wrong,
E'er pierc'd the ear of Heaven——and drew down bolts
On heads that moſt deſerv'd them, let not mine,
Now, riſe in vain.——Fear, from this moment;
And, fearing, feel; and tremble to ſuſtain,
The whips that furies ſhake o'er cruel men.
[*To* Aumele.] You have a ſon; take care this curſe not reach him.
You clods [*To the creditors.*] in human forms, that cou'd deny Earth,

Earth, gentler than your own, its mournful claim,
To cover the remains of that great chief;
May all your wives prove falſe, and bring you heirs
Of liberal hearts, whoſe riots may undo you!
Your factors all prove thieves, your debtors bankrupts;
And thou, ſtern patron of their bluſhleſs plea,
Live to loſe all thy lordſhips; not even ſave
Room on thy dunghill for thyſelf and dog.
Be old before thou dieſt, to die more wretched!
That, as thou haſt deny'd the dead a grave,
Thy living miſery in vain may wiſh one.——
I've well begun—on—imitate——exceed. [*To* Chalons.
Old Aum. Force him away. [*Exit* La Foy *guarded.*
3d Pref. Remember where you are. [*To* Chalons.
Chal. Thus low the wretched bends to thank your counſel.
I'll teach my temper'd language to ſuſpend
All ſenſe of filial pain——and ſpeak but duty.
Not that I fear to raiſe my voice as loud,
And with as fierce complaint, as touch'd La Foy;
But that from me, who am ſo deeply ſunk
In miſery's gulph, ſo hopeleſs in diſtreſs,
'Twou'd ſeem the raſh man's means to cure deſpair,
By caſting off his load, that ends with life.
No——let my ſuffering duty to the dead
Live on——and pay the tribute of your praiſe,
Honeſt ſeverity renowns your juſtice,
Why ſhould ſuch white, unſinning ſouls as yours,
Forgive the guilt you act not?—Why ſhou'd ſervice
By any man perform'd, to bleſs his country,
Exact his country's mercy?—What tho' my father,
Ere ſcarce arriv'd at youth, out-acted man;
Number'd that day no part of life, wherein
He ſnatch'd not ſome new trophy from your foes,
Was he for that to triumph o'er your courts,
Superior to the laws he ſought to ſave?
What tho' the ſums he dy'd indebted for,
Were borrow'd, not for his, but public uſe,
Shou'd he be free from payment; becauſe poor,

From a ſpent patrimony, kindly ſpread
To the ſtarv'd ſoldiers wants?—'Twas his brave choice;
And, when the willing ſuffer,—are they wrong'd?
Old Aum. The precedent were ill—
Chal. True, my kind Lord!
What is it to your courts, that weigh but laws,
That after all our great defeats in war,
Which in their dreadful ruins buried quick
Courage and hope in all men, but himſelf;
He forc'd the foe from that proud height of conqueſt,
To tremble in his turn---and ſue for peace!
What tho' he ſav'd an hundred thouſand lives,
By hard fatigues, that robb'd him of his own;
Dauntleſs to ſummer heats, and winter's froſt,
Ill airs, mines, cannons, and th' unſparing ſword;
Was he, for that, to hope eſcape from debt,
Or privilege from priſon?
3d. *Preſ.* 'Twas his fault
To be ſo prodigal---he ſhou'd have ſpar'd. [army,
Old Aum. The ſtate allow'd him what maintain'd their
Chal. You ſay he ſhou'd have ſpar'd--He ſhou'd indeed.
Have ſpar'd, to truſt his hopes on hopeleſs ground.
I too will ſpare to ſpeak the pangs I feel,
And feed my thoughts within.---Yet to theſe men,
[*To the Creditors*]. To theſe ſoft-hearted men, theſe wiſe men, here;
Theſe only good men---Men that pay their debts;
To theſe, I turn my hopes---theſe honeſt ſouls!
1*ſt Cred.* And ſo they are.
2*d. Cred.* It is our doctrine, Sir.
Chal. Be conſtant in it—leſt you change your road,
And ſtraggle to ſalvation—Do not cheat
The devil of his beſt dues—make punctual payment.
But my ſad ſwelling heart forgets its cue—
On deaf and narrow natures, ſuch as yours,
I will not waſte one hint that honour loves;
The court ſhall ſqueeze no ſcruple from the law,
That lends your felon hearts the weight of right.

I know

I know there is no muſic to your ears
More pleaſing, than the groans of men in pain:
The tears of widows, and the orphans cry,
Feaſt but your happier ſenſe of wealth's coarſe joy;
But rather than my father's reverend duſt,
Shall want its place in that ſtill monument
Where all his ſilent anceſtors ſleep ſafe,
Take me, your living pledge---Renounce the dead,
And, in my fetter'd freedom, find revenge.
I am poſſeſs'd of ſtrength to ſcorn your malice,
Shun the deteſted world, and love reſtraint.
I wou'd forget the ſun, that ſhines on you,
And chuſe my dwelling where no light can enter. ——
Releaſe my father's corpſe.

Val. Alas! young Lord,
Conſider well what hopes you caſt away;
Your liberty, youth, joy, life, friends and fame.
Your bounty is employ'd upon a ſubject,
That cannot feel its vaſtneſs: The known glory
Of your dead father vindicates his urn,
Treads on their living duſt who wrong his name,
And breaks the priſon's gates that bind his body.

Old Aum. Let him alone--the young man loves renown:
If he courts miſery, let miſery meet him.
Provided theſe conſent, the court objects not.

Cha. Conſent!-the wrongful doubt offends their wiſdom.
Can theſe trade-tools lie ſullen, and ſhun work,
When willing intereſt hires 'em? —— Calls their idol,
And ſhall their zeal grow deaf--and drop their worſhip!--
From my dead father's corpſe what hopes of profit;
Nay, they have there no chance of giving pain.
What reliſh of revenge, where 'tis not felt?
In me they're ſure, at leaſt of preſent vengeance,
And cheriſh proſpect of ſome future gain.

1ſt Cred. What think you of the offer?--Shall we cloſe?

2d Cred. I like the motion well—It gives ſome hopes.

1ſt Cred. Some young, unthinking girl, or gay, warm widow,

Pleas'd with his fame for manly deeds in arms,
May pay us all our debts, and bind him hers.
3d Pref. What is your anſwer?
2d Cred. You ſhall ſpeak for all.
1ſt Cred. Make all our actions on his father laid,
Stand the ſon's debts, and we releaſe the body.
Old Aum. The court muſt grant you that.
Chal. I thank you all.
In this you have confer'd a glory on me,
That nobly over-pays your envious view.
Come, lead me to the gloom I long to find;
'Twill free me from your forms, and ſhade my own.
[*Exit, with creditors, officers, &c.*
Old Aum. Strange madneſs!
Val. Madneſs, do you call it!——Term it
Strange, generous extacy of matchleſs virtue!
Worthy of happier fortune, nobler fate!——
But reſt that now unargued.——To my cauſe
Already I have found your Lordſhips bounty
So laviſh in your grants, that it ſhould teach me
To limit my deſires to narrower bounds.
3d Pref. There's nothing you can aſk, we wou'd not grant.
2d Pref. Our wills are all your own; pray uſe 'em freely.
Val. It has been here, you know, the court's kind cuſtom,
Confirm'd by time's long venerable practice,
That at ſurrender of the place I held,
Some grant indulg'd confirms a favour aſk'd.
As proof then of your grace, that loves to give,
I tempt its proffer'd bounty.
3d Pref. Think it yours.
Val. I aſk remiſſion for that raſh La Foy;
And that you, Lord Aumele, whoſe wrong partook
Th' affront that mov'd the court, will pardon with it,
And ſign his wiſh'd enlargement.
Old Aum. Nay, my Lord,
Demand one half of my eſtate——Take all——

But

But ſpare me this ſtrange prayer—It warms my wonder!
Val. If I muſt be deny'd——
2d Preſ. That cannot be.
3d Preſ. I have a voice to give.
2d Preſ. I add mine to it.
3d Preſ. If then perſuaſion fails——we muſt inſiſt,
That votes decide this queſtion.
Old Aum. You are too abſolute;
I cou'd conſent to any thing but this:
Yet, this——if it muſt be——my Lord——I yield.
Val. I thank your hard concurrence.
Old Aum. Break up the court. [*The court riſes.*
[*Exeunt, all but* Valdore *and ſervant.*
Val. I'll follow inſtantly——Le Fer.
Le Fer. My Lord.
Val. What didſt thou think, but now, of young Chalons;
How did his conduct ſtrike thee?
Le Fer. With due wonder;
And ſo did brave La Foy's.
Val. Fye, fye; he's faulty.——
What ready money have I unaſſign'd?
La Foy. Enough for every uſe your wiſh can form.
Val. 'Tis well—I'm wounded, when the brave feel pain:
Some call this weakneſs—Heaven turn their hearts.
The filial piety of young Chalons, demands
Reward beyond our admiration——
Methinks from his example——low mankind,
Shou'd riſe in body's ſcorn—for taſte of mind;
Fly the coarſe droſs, that weighs down virtue's claim;
Stretch for futurity—and grapple fame.

ACT II. SCENE I.

A Priſon. Goaler *and* Le Fer.

Goal. SO ripe a judgment, at an age ſo young;
'Tis wonderful!
Le Fer. Religious——tho' a ſoldier!

Goal.

Goal. That ſtill is more a wonder! ——So to quit,
In the ſtrong tide of youth, his flowing fortune;
Drop his own living taſte of joy's full feaſt,
To give his father's dead remains a grave,
Seems ſomething that exceeds the bounds of faith.
Le Fer. It makes a golden precedent indeed!
It teaches piety a bright, new road,
To reach perfection by a ſhorter cut.
Goal. What is his age?
Le Fer. Scarce three and twenty years.
When firſt he ſerv'd unhappy Burgundy,
I remember
Under his more unhappy father's wing;
Where ſerving and commanding, he learn'd both,
With ſuch a ready fire and temper mix'd,
That ſometimes he appear'd his father's father;
And never leſs, than our great captain's ſon.
Goal. Look, where he comes; and ſee his friend La Foy,
Waiting the father's corpſe, the ſon has freed,
Now moving to its laſt, long priſon's cell.

Enter Funeral, attended by Chalons, *and* La Foy, *&c.*

La Foy. How like a ſilent ſtream, by night's dark brow
O'er-ſhaded, gliding under ſtill cold ſhowers,
Moves the ſlow march of that ſad ſolemn train!
Tears, ſighs, and mournful black, but paint woe's face,
Within lies all the depth that drowns diſtreſs.
Chal. Stay, friends, a moment——while a wretch, deny'd
To bear due murmurs to the cave of death,
Bounds here his hollow groans. Reſt, reſt awhile.
[*To the bearers, who ſet down the hearſe.*
Oh! hail; for ever hail! dear reverend ſhade!
Adieu, ye lov'd remains of that bleſs'd form,
Who gave a nation reſt—— and loſt his own!
Cruel extent of proof, that he who toils
To ſerve (miſtaken thought) the public cauſe,
Works for a fleeting ſhadow, that but ſeems

To

To wear a tempting ſhade——a dream, and fades.
Here ſtands thy poor executor—thy ſon;
More proud a captive, thus thy hearſe to free,
Than when he fought thy cauſe, and ſhar'd its fame.
Of all the thouſands thou haſt ſerv'd and ſav'd,
Theſe only cou'd remember. Theſe dear few,
Remember well—for they forget not gratitude.
I thank you—and I wiſh I cou'd reward;
'Tis the laſt friendly aid you lend his love.
His native land, like an unnatural mother,
Not only has devour'd the worth ſhe bore,
But blots it from her memory's blank record;
Leaving thy heir (great ſtain of want!) ſo poor,
He cannot buy thee one ſad humble ſtone,
To mark its only ſpot exempt from ſhame.

[*Obſerves ſoldiers weep.*

Alas! the mournful ſcene's not wholly mine!
The honeſt ſoldiers weep!—La Foy too weeps!
Oh, Heaven! behold a miracle of virtue,
The very goaler weeps!—And look, La Foy,
The plaintiff crocodiles themſelves ſhed tears!
Nay, then—my father's bones ſhall need no tomb:
Be theſe his body's balm; theſe drops, more hard
Than Idumean flints, on ſun-burnt plains!

[*Creditors ſeem to weep.*

La Foy. Away, ye ſniv'ling rogues! nor mix prophane
The dry-drawn tribute of a whine like yours,
With rites of heart-felt ſorrow—Howl not here:
Strain your ſqueez'd eye-ſtrings 'till they crack, for pain;
Ne'er ſhall one generous dew-drop ſtart, for virtue.

Prieſt. On with the proceſſion.

Chal. Hold—yet hold ———
But, 'till in preſence of his honour'd hearſe,
I ſtruggle 'till I find a few poor legacies.
[*To a ſoldier*] Come hither, generous ſoldier—Wear this ring;
'Twill, when thou feeſt it, bid thy valour glow
Diſtinguiſh'd as thy pity.

Thou

Thou, good friend, [*To another.*]
Croſs thy afflicted manly breaſt ſhall bind
This ſcarf——and doubly dye the warlike crimſon.
[*To the bearers.*] You, gentle bearers of the nobleſt load,
That e'er preſs'd willing ſhoulders, take this purſe;
Divide its little all——for thee, La Foy,
Poor as thou think'ſt thy friend, I've gold yet left:
Take thou this medal; wear it for his ſake
Who knew thy worth, and lov'd it.
And now my wants and wealth are ended all:
Now——bleak, inhoſpitable world, farewel;
Darkneſs will, gratis, in my ſilent cell
Furniſh an unbought ſhelter——life's ſhort ſtorm
Blown over, I once more ſhall meet my father.
'Till then——tears ſpeak the reſt. [*Weeps.*

La Foy. On——on——he ſhakes me.

Funeral proceeds.

1*ſt Cred.* No farther. [*Stopping* Chalons.] Goaler, at your peril, keep him.
What! ſquander our eſtate before our faces!

Goal. Sir---pleaſe you to return?

2*d Cred.* Pleaſe!---he ſhall pleaſe.
Come, every little helps---and money's money.

Chal. Dear, venerable earth!--adieu, for ever! [*Goes in.*

[*Exeunt omnes.*

SCENE II. *A chamber in* Valdore's *houſe.*

Enter Amelia *and* Florella.

Amel. Your ſtory of Chalons has greatly mov'd me.
If Aumele touch'd my thoughts, 'twas partial folly!
Yet 'twas not love, 'twas duty; ſince my father
Pointed his highneſs out, not warn'd me from it.

Flor. Aumele is light, deceitful, looſe, ignoble;
Loves every face, is every woman's claim,
And ſhe who firſt believes, is firſt undone.
His very friendſhip's falſe---himſelf, whom only

He

He wiſhes not to cheat, he cheats the moſt.
He courts you for a miſtreſs, not a wife.
Amel. No more---I hear him with ſuſpecting hope!
And doubt, I ſhou'd not truſt him.
Flor. Still 'tis thus!——
Woman, by nature form'd to be undone,
Oft ſees, yet helps the treaſon ſhe wou'd ſhun.

Enter Young Aumele.

Amel. Huſh, good Florella--huſh--no more--he comes!
The gay, the witty, cou'd I add the juſt,
Aumele were all the maid belov'd cou'd wiſh. [*Exit* Flor.
Aum. Lovelieſt Amelia; if, before my hour,
I break on your retirement, thank your charms.
Love has its wing'd deſires, when beauty calls.——
Sweeter than ſpring! than ſummer's ſun more aweful!
Yet colder than the winter's ſtarry nights!
Say, how much longer will that frozen heart
Reſiſt the warmth it gives me?
Amel. Gay Aumele!——
Lovers make light complaints, who love like you.
Too well you gueſs the father muſt prevail,
Where daughters, by their duty, guide their choice:
You know my heart admits no wavering flame.
Aum. Cou'd gifts of empty air enrich my claim,
How wealthy had you made me!——ſtill look angel,
But more like woman love—meet flame with flame.
Amel. Has not my father's will pronounc'd me yours?
Aum. True—but methinks he gave what was not his;
Your lover's pride wou'd owe you to yourſelf.
Whate'er you to a father's orders yield,
Proves your obedience, but it proves not love:
The ſureſt teſt of love is confidence.
Amel. She gives without reſerve, who gives up all.
Aum. Manner, in miſer's deeds, deſtroys their bounty:
Bonds they inſiſt on—firſt—then pinch out gold;
While the true friend tells faſt, and truſts repay.

Amel.

Amel. I underſtand you not.
Aum. Had you but love,
Then cou'd you ſoon——
Amel. What mean you?
Aum. Credit mine———
But your calm, patient paſſion waits dull form;
Aſks holy mortgage——to inſure captivity,
And doubts if honour's ties can bind like prieſts.
Amel. How!--for thy honour, ſhou'd I part with mine?
Fain wou'd I think leſs fouly of Aumele,
Than once to fear he dares deſign my ruin.
Aum. Thy ruin!——No, thy happineſs he courts--
Wou'd crown Amelia empreſs of his ſoul,
Not warden of his body——See her reign
Sovereign, by free-born choice, with generous ſway,
Safely ſurrounded with thy guard of charms.
What need---what uſe---of yeoman duty's aid?
Amel. What wou'dſt thou dare?———
Aum. Why——'tis unjuſt, my love,
To treat our queen, like ſlaves--Weigh marriage rightly,
You'll find it humbling fierce, tumultuous joy,
Concurrent wills, and elegant deſires;
Made cold, and lifeleſs all——becauſe compell'd.
Amel. Oh, Heaven! be gone for ever from my ſight;
Nor dare to blaſt my name, from this black moment,
With breath more baneful than the viper's hiſs!
If, in ſome ſofter hour's unguarded faith,
Truſtful I liſten'd, and half hop'd thee juſt;
'Spight of thy known, thy dreaded lightneſs, heard thee—
Puniſh me, angry Powers, when I forgive thee!
Aum. Have frowns ſuch charms! why heaves that ſnowy boſom,
Unform'd for any ſighs, but thoſe of love?
[*Forcing her hand, and embraces her,—ſhe puts him aſide.*
Change 'em for fiercer tranſports, yet unknown:
Soft murmurs---ſtifled whiſpers---throbbing heart—
Eyes mixing angry fear, with fond deſires;

Earneſt

Earneſt of joy too violent to laſt,
And kindly made too ſhort, leſt bliſs might kill.
[*After ſtruggling, ſhe breaks from him.*
Amel. Unhand me, villain! traitor, fly this moment!
O! that the eyes thou wrong'ſt, cou'd look thee dead!
The curs'd hyæna's wily cry—falſe tears
Of crocodiles—all, all that's fatal, dire,
Deſtructive to our ſex—— all meet in thee!
No, baſe Aumele—— once paſſion did but pauſe——
This inſult on my honour ends it all:
I'd ſooner——but be gone——'tis guilt to ſee thee;
But, to hold converſe with thee, blots my fame. [*Going.*
Aum. Hear yet one humble word.——
Amel. When next I do,
Then curſe me every Power that hates not virtue.
[*Going, meets her father entering.*
My father!—ſure he has not been a witneſs
To this man's daring perfidy!

Enter Valdore.

Val. Amelia!——
Young Lord, allow me to expect your pardon, [*To* Aum.
That buſineſs of importance calls my daughter.
Aum. I humbly take my leave. [*Exit bowing.*
[Valdore *ſees him to the door, and returns.*
Val. Why look you ſad, Amelia?
Amel. I was mov'd,
By news my woman brought me of this fame,
From great and generous praiſe, that crowns Chalons.
Val. Kind Heav'n prepar'd that thought to ſuit my purpoſe.
Thy duty ever met thy father's will;
And, as thou know'ſt I will but for thy good,
I have no cauſe to doubt thy wiſh'd obedience.
Amel. Sir, I am yours—ſo wholly, that my heart
Unheſitating hears—when you command.
Val. To ſay I love thee, were too ſhort—thou art
My age's only comfort——my ſoul's joy——
My hope for future time——my pride in this.

Amel.

Amel. Wou'd I had merit, Sir, to make this juſtice.
Val. I thought, Amelia, at my entrance here,
I ſaw thee mov'd to anger?
Amel. Oh! my heart! *Aſide.*
Val. Aumele was with thee——as I know him vain;
I fear ſome lightneſs ſhook thee!
Amel. Me! my Lord!
Val. Sprung from a brutal ſtem, himſelf more brutal,
I now, too late, repent I bade thee love him.
Too conſcious of his father's power, I poorly
Barter'd my love of truth, for earth's proud views;
And Heaven reſentful, has reſolv'd to blaſt 'em.
To him, this morning, I ſurrender'd up
A power, his ſchemes inſidious long had croſs'd:
But, by his conduct in Chalons' juſt cauſe,
New ſhock'd by ſavage proof of flinty nature,
He wak'd me into deteſtation, due
To his whole impious race, and ſtop thy ruin.
Amel. Alas! my Lord, far happier had I been,
Never to have indulg'd a liſt'ning ear.
Unapprehenſive innocence, in maids,
Weighs man by its own meanings.
Val. Wary maids——
Amel. Alas! there are no ſuch, when love reigns lord.
Ah! what, if in obedience to your orders,
I ſhou'd have given my heart, where you aſſign'd it?
Think to what miſery then my duty dragg'd me.
Paſſions new-born at firſt are in our power;
But, when their tide runs ſtrong, they ſweep reſolves.
Val. Away—ere yet the prieſt has join'd your hands,
To truſt your paſſion's range beyond your power,
Were treaſon againſt honour---if 'tis ſo,
Recal it, while you can: You are too wiſe
To doat, Amelia, on a youth ſo weightleſs.
The ſolid lover guards his favourer's fame,
Which the fool's whole wiſh'd joy but ſeeks to ſully.
Boaſters of frothy ſoul, when young, like this,
So little too inform'd by manly virtue,

Blaſt,

Blaſt, like a baſiliſk, each fair they look on:
Loud, among lewd companions, wildly cruel,
Each but compares with each his liſt of conqueſts;
And he's moſt hero, who has ruin'd moſt.
Amel. And is Aumele of taſte deprav'd like this?
Val. Name him no more——I, whoſe miſtaken hand
Brought malady, will alſo bring the cure.
Chalons, the brave Chalons, ſhall claim thy heart,
And prize it to its value. Smile, Amelia;
Chalons, that mov'd thy praiſe, deſerves thy pity.
Chalons has ev'ry worth ſhould charm a woman;
A mind exalted, like a fancied God!
Judge it, by what thou'ſt heard of his dead father.
Example never reach'd it—in has fir'd
My blood to ſenſe of tranſport!——Give him then
Your wonder and your love.
Amel. He has my wonder! has my heart's applauſe;
But, for its tenderneſs, 'tis ſcarce my own!
Val. Peace, Amelia;
Leſt thou ſhou'dſt lead me to believe—but—no.——
Aumele had ne'er the power to wound thy honour;
I cannot then ſuſpect thy heart admits him.
Is that a man to move a lady's wiſh?
Light rival of her ſex's emptieſt arts,
The toilet and the ball-room are his fields——
Thence riſe his trophies——there expands his fame.
Amel. Yet, once, you thought him worthieſt of my love.
Val. How careful ſhou'd men be to weigh reſolves!
Puſh thought to conſequence, and take in fear!
Elſe comes reproach, let looſe——for ever ours.
I charge you, on my bleſſing, ſhun Aumele;
And view Chalons as one that claims your love.

Enter Le Fer.

Le Fer. La Foy, my Lord, attends.
Val. Amelia——you may now
Retire, to ſuit your wiſh to my command;

Or bear the weight of a wrong'd father's curſe,
And live a ſtranger to me.
Amel. Oh! Sir!——Oh! father! [*Kneeling.*
Val. Away——I will not hear thee!—go—obey!
[*Exit* Amelia, *weeping.*

Enter La Foy.

Val. I wiſh'd to ſee you, Sir, for your own ſake;
'Twas to lend counſel to your iron raſhneſs:
Love of your bravery forc'd me to eſteem you.
Haſte, and ſubmit yourſelf to warm Aumele.
Weigh your too bold contempt of a court's power,
And deprecate its vengeance.
La Foy. When I do——
May my tongue rot.---My Lord, you know not me.
Submit, and crave forgiveneſs of a brute!
What tho' his wealth were equal to a monarch's;
Nay, tho' himſelf a monarch (as his pride
Out-monarchs his crown'd maſter's) let me die
The death his baſeneſs merits, ere once ſtoop
To think commiſſion'd brutes are leſs than monſters.
Does he not uſe his power to cruſh the needy?
Oppreſs the ſoldier, ſcholar, all deſert?
Nay, wrong'd he not the Marſhal!——Nature form'd
This loath'd, wry mouth of law, to ſcare mankind,
By ſcorn of ugly vice, to love of virtue!
How ſavagely the brute blaſphemer ſpoke
Of the dead General!——Aſk him forgiveneſs!
Firſt let me periſh law-ſtruck!—A judge!—a dog!
How he inſulted o'er the brave man's memory!
Perdition ſeize him for't!——I weep to think on't!
Val. I was to blame
To yield my place too blindly—but, perhaps,
'Tis practicable to retrieve that error.
Sir, give not way to paſſion.
La Foy. I weep not when I fight.—But, pardon me,
I melt becauſe too weak to check oppreſſion.

Whene'er

Whene'er I think of the vile injuries,
The bold black injuries done my worthy master,
I cou'd devour him piece-meal.

Val. Pray be temperate—
I but adviſe your frenzy——not conſtrain:
Opinion is as free as air——and they
Who err in power, are leaſt exempt from cenſure.

Enter Le Fer.

Le Fer. The creditors attend with Count Chalons.

Val. Pay thoſe hard men their claims--wait the Count
Pleaſe you, La Foy; to witneſs their receipts, [in.
And take their full releaſes——what but now
I ſaid, meant nothing——'twas this call
Detain'd you for their coming——what you'll ſee
Will more explain my purpoſe.

La Foy. What I hear
Alarms my love and wonder.

Le Fer. This way, Sir. [*Exeunt* Le Fer *and* La Foy.

Enter Chalons, *wiping his eyes, and melancholy.* Valdore *meets him.*

Val. Brave Sir, you are moſt welcome.--Fye! be huſh'd,
You have out-wept a woman!——Noble Chalons!
No man that lives but has a father loſt,
Or once muſt loſe a father.

Chal. Sir, 'tis true.——
I never thought my father was immortal;
But as I paſs'd your hall, his reverend picture
Smil'd on my ſtartled eye, and forc'd ſome tears.

Val. My Lord—I lov'd your father---and wou'd with
One favour from his ſon,

Chal. Of me——a favour!
What has he left to grant, who wants his liberty?

Val. The liberty you think you want, is yours.
The rich man that beholds the brave in chains,
And pants not for his freedom, is a ſlave.

Jewels or gold, whate'er your wants require,
Take all that I poſſeſs, and end reſtraint.
You look amazement.

Chal. Nay, I am amaz'd!
You cannot mock diſtreſs——Natures, like yours,
Call feign'd compaſſion inſult. But your virtue
Shall wonder, in its turn——for I'll not tax
Your bounty for myſelf——but beg releaſe
(In my forgotten ſtead) of poor La Foy.

Enter La Foy.

Val. See what a power the prayers of good men hold!
I give him to your friendſhip—and to his
I join your own due freedom——Live and love.
Your father's debts diſcharg'd, his name ſhines free.

La Foy. 'Tis an aſtoniſhing, yet ſacred truth!
I come from witneſſing the generous deed——
See here, your own diſcharge.

Chal. Honour'd Valdore!—[*Pauſes.*] But words wou'd wrong my meaning.
Dumb be my tongue, while bluſhes only ſpeak——
All language is too light, for deeds like theſe!

Val. Wou'd you requite 'em, Count?

La Foy. Command his life——
And, if one ſerves not; throw in mine, my lord.

[Chalons *ſtands ſtruck with ſilent attention.*

Val. I have an only child, her mother's likeneſs,
Care of my life, and comfort of my years!
I ſtand ſo near the brink of time's dark ſtream,
That ſoon in courſe I muſt drop in, and die:
Fain wou'd I firſt provide a guard more ſtrong
For my Amelia's youth, than age like mine.
Her birth perhaps leſs ſplendid, match'd with yours,
Yet worthy nobleſt notice. Take her, then,
And with her all my fortune——Call her wife.
Thank me, by loving her; 'tis all the gratitude
My hopes, from brave Chalons, can bear to claim.

Chal.

Chal. Oh! what delightful payments you exact,
When you thus plunge me deeper far in debt!
Now, not my life's laſt toils can ever pay you.
She were, without a dower, a prince's prize;
How greatly then too rich, too dear, for me!
Val. Is it reſolv'd then?
Chal. Sir—I have lov'd her long ——
Deſpairing (loſt in fortune's clouds) to gain her.
Her beauty is the boaſt of Burgundy;
Her father is Valdore! —— there honour ſtrikes
Perfection's proudeſt point —— and joy ſtands dumb.
Heav'n grant her generous will but pleas'd as mine,
And ere the ſun yet ſets —— his day's a year.
Val. Enough, I anſwer for her willing duty.
She wants no ſenſe of that —— and knows your worth.
This day ſhall ſmile on my compleated wiſh.
Chal. 'Tis more than love's ſtretch'd arrogance of hope
Durſt promiſe my deſires. Oh, Sir! I groan
Beneath ſuch added weight of benefit!
You, Curtius like; have caſt into the gulph
Of our ſunk Burgundy's ungrateful ſhame,
Your fame and fortune, to redeem her name.
Val. Fortune's an empty well —— and hoards but air,
'Till uſe lends weight to wealth—and taſte to care:
Then ſhine the rich man's joys—when ſhar'd they flow;
He that wou'd well poſſeſs, muſt wide beſtow.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

ACT III. SCENE I.

A garden, belonging to Valdore's *houſe.*

On one ſide, Florella *and* Aumele, *diſcover'd, talking earneſtly: On the other, enter* Belgard.

Bel. SO! he has lodg'd me here, for his old purpoſe.
How baſe are theſe employments!—I'll forſake him.
Thinks he, becauſe I owe his father's purſe

My poor ſubſiſtence, I but eat to ſin!
From this cloſe conference, and that low voice,
The new bride's faithleſs maid, or I gueſs wrong,
Betrays ſome truſted ſecret.—— Hark! he's louder.

Aum. Well---grant that I advis'd the uſeful ſcheme,
Which authoris'd thy crafty tongue to paint me
In odious lights; that, ſeeming not my friend,
Her caution ſhou'd not catch the leaſt faint glimpſe,
That I had bought thy ſervice; was you by that,
Commiſſion'd to betray me for another,
And pay Chalons the joys beſpoke by me?

Flor. If you cou'd hear——I meant to do you ſervice;
Enrich you, by your loſs—— never, 'till now,
Was your hope likely——never near, 'till now.

Aum. Thy fancy is all woman——wind and feather!

Flor. Will you hear me?
You ſay my Lady's married——thank Heav'n for it,
And feel the clue that guides you.—Track two footſteps;
One o'er the trodden path of ſome hedg'd field,
That tempts approach to beat it more, yet tells not;
The other 'croſs cold lawns of ſhivering ſnow,
'Till then by mortal wanderer unimprinted;
Which of theſe two proclaims diſcovery ſooneſt?
Shame on ſuch ſhallow plotters!—— When in love,
Int'reſt, or treaſon, your he blunderer moves,
Without a woman's help, his wit deſtroys him.

Aum. What am I to infer from this fine ſtory?

Flor. Her marriage but invites her lover's hopes;
Unbars the door of doubt, faſt lock'd by danger.
France, you well know, truſts wives with ample freedom;
And when theſe wives have maids--thoſe maids good friends,
And thoſe friends liberal hearts---what think you now?

Aum. Provided ſhe conſented, this were eaſy.

Flor. O! there are arts——conſent or not conſent:
In ſhort, I know ſhe loves you——did you know
But half as well who ſerves your int'reſt there,
You'd ſcorn to weigh how dear the hope may coſt you.

Aum. Nay, that's unjuſt reproach. Here's a *new* witneſs; [*Gives her a purſe.*

I want

I want no grateful will to note thy friendſhip;
If it ſucceeds, in this ſweet view thou ſhew'ſt me,
Be richer than thy miſtreſs.

Flor. See! I told you,
She ſhou'd walk there alone—pretend you ſought her.

[*Exit* Florella.

Belgard *comes forward.*

Bel. So, Sir! I ſee for what you dragg'd me hither.
Preferr'd to be your pander; help to ruin
A fine young Lady, form'd for love and piety.
That ſhe cou'd ever fancy one ſo wicked!

Aum. No, no; I brought thee but to take the air,
Thy dull'd wit wanted freſh'ning: and beſides,
Thou haſt a ſword edg'd ſharp, how blunt ſoe'er
Thy ſurly virtue makes thee—Threat'nings, Belgard,
Threat'nings grow frequent, and theſe groves are ſolitary.
What! you want money now? That makes you peeviſh.
There ——— [*Offers money.*

Bel. I ſcorn your money, Sir; nor will be bought
To a baſe act. I ſhall acquaint your father.

Aum. Aye, do; he'll not believe thee—his own gambols
Lay not my way, his loves have hard round faces;
And what men wiſh not theirs, they grudge not others.

Bel. But will not law defend a Lady's honour?

Aum. No, 'tis the Lady's property: while ſo,
What legal right has power to enter on it?
Grant it were ſtolen, (as yet, woes me, it is not)
Then in comes law indeed, and makes good pen'worths
In the rogues rents that robb'd it.—Ah, Belgard!
Had'ſt thou a kinſman judge ——I'd ſay, ſin cheap;
But mum for that ———So, couſin, go thy way:
I'll think on thy advice, muſe here awhile,
And meet thee at the Vine, to hear more counſel.

Bel. Adieu, then, if you're ſtill thus obſtinate;
The loſs is but your own: henceforth, your father
Shall hold my care excus'd for ſuch a ſon;
And I'll renounce his help, or wake his caution.

[*Exit* Belgard.

Aum. He went in pinch of time; for yonder walks
A ſaint, this bluſt'ring devil had ſcar'd from ſin.
He's born to ſpoil my markets.—I'll ſtand ſhaded.
[Aumele *ſtands on one ſide.*

Enter Amelia *and* Florella.

Flor. You know I never lik'd him; if I had,
Good faith, I might have laugh'd myſelf to pity:
For cou'd you ſee how like a love-ſick mope,
The poor, touch'd penitent, weeps, prays and curſes,
Forſaken tho' he is, you'd ne'er forget him.
Amel. He has too much deſerv'd the pain he ſuffers.
Flor. Wou'd you ſhun him?
Perhaps, for much he ever lov'd our grove,
He may not yet have left it.——Look!---he's here.
Amel. I charge you, ſtir not—ſtay, and be a witneſs,
If he dares ſpeak---but ſure he will not dare.
Light chance lends ſlander oft to idle tongues,
And innocence might ſuffer,
Flor. I will be near. [*Exit,*

Aumele *approaches reſpectfully.*

Aum. Madam---forgive a trembling criminal;
Guilty---but greatly puniſh'd---that---thus --led,
By chance---his conſcious reverence of your power,
Permits an aweful anguiſh to approach you.
Amel. Chance was unkind to both; ſince neither's wiſh
Cou'd have forecaſt a meeting, neither's reaſon
Cou'd find pretence to juſtify.
Aum. Oh! my Amelia!
Amel. No, falſe Aumele!--forget preſumptuous freedom,
While I was yet my own, I was not yours;
Leſs can I, when another's.
Aum. I was to blame——
But you have puniſh'd adoration's warmth,
As coldneſs ſhou'd be puniſh'd!

Amel.

Amel. Guilty warmth,
And adoration's tranſports never met.
Aum. Oh! had you ſeen my agony of ſoul,
When, led by ſwift repentance, I return'd
To throw me at your feet—— but met your father,
Alter'd like you——averſe to ev'ry prayer,
And all forgetful of his once kind wiſh,
You wou'd have wept the miſery you caus'd.
Diſtracted with my love, rage, ſhame, deſpair,
I loath'd my name, race, life; but, moſt, my crime,
And hid me in your grove—to die abſolv'd.
Amel. Your being here is adding to your crime:
If truly penitent, offend no more.
Aum. I wou'd have ſlept away ſome ſenſe of pain,
Made the cold earth my bed; and try'd all night,
Moiſten'd by midnight dews, to ſhut out ſhame:
But buſy fancy rais'd thy beauteous form
(Diſtracting image!)---giving joy to him,
Who reaps the harveſt my curs'd folly ſow'd.
Amel. Be dumb—be gone—and never ſee me more:
Honour demands it now, if juſtice did not.
I can no more——I ſhou'd forget thee quite,
But thy fault will not let me. Once I dreamt,
And ſlumb'ring fancy ſhew'd thee gay, kind, honeſt;
But, waking, 'twas no more.
Aum. You wou'd forget me then?
Amel. I muſt, and will forget thee.
Aum If it muſt be——'tis beſt I take my leave:
He cannot die too ſoon, who lives for ſcorn.
Amel. I do not wiſh your death; but go—for ever.
Aum. For ever is a diſmal ſound, Amelia!
Wou'd it be more than pity might allow,
Since all my crime, bold as it was, was love,
To grant one laſt—ſoft—trembling—diſtant touch,
[*Takes her hand to kiſs it. She draws it back again.*
Of this dear hand---that ſhuns me? 'twas too much;
'Twas extaſy too great for one condemn'd.
Amel. Be gone, Aumele!

Aum.

Aum. Grant one nearer rapture— [*Takes her hand again.*
And it ſhall dwell ſo ſweetly on my thought,
That memory ſhall admit no ſad idea.
This laſt permitted tranſport, and I go. [*Kiſſes her hand.*

Enter La Foy, *at a diſtance, and ſtarts.*

Yet, ſince I never am to ſee you more,
You will not, muſt not, think deſpair grows bold,
If I thus force one warmer, dearer draught,
From theſe preſs'd lips, to cool my feveriſh ſoul.
[*Struggling, he kiſſes her.*

Amel. Leave me, preſumptuous, grief-ſtruck madman, leave me.

Aum. I wou'd——but 'tis impoſſible.

La Foy. Sure 'tis a viſion.— [*Draws his ſword.*
Draw, ruffian, or thou dy'ſt.

[Aumele *retreats fighting in confuſion, follow'd out by* La Foy.

Amel. Florella---where?—Oh! wretched, loſt Amelia!
This only wanted to compleat thy woe.
My fame's fair promiſe, my white name is loſt:
Blood too muſt follow.———Innocence, in vain,
Will now appeal to truth's diſtruſted aid,
And I am black as guilt——indulging none.
[*Exit in diſorder.*

Enter La Foy, *putting up his ſword.*

La Foy. Light as the robber's purpoſe was his foot,
And he has 'ſcap'd my vengeance. Now I'm cool,
Let me reflect.———I'm glad of his eſcape,
His death had broad proclaim'd her now hid ſhame.
What ſhall I do? Shall I conceal or tell it?
Something I muſt reſolve, nor injure friendſhip.
Had ſhe been well inclin'd———to keep her cautious,
Her ſecret ſhou'd be kept——but——ſhe's a woman;
And who can ſtem their paſſions? To ſurmount

Her

Her ſex's rage of heart beneath reſtraint,
Is harder than to prop a falling tower.

Enter Valdore.

Val. Good morning, my La Foy.
La Foy. My Lord, good morrow.
How if I break it to him? he is wiſe, [*Aſide.*
And his authority will give due weight
And warrant to his counſels.———
It ſhall be ſo.
Val. 'Tis an inſpiring ſun———and the day ſhines;
Good omen to your friend's beginning joys.
La Foy. Yes, the air's hot—I wiſh it had been purer.
Val. I never heard it merited that cenſure.
La Foy. Some climes change faſt, my Lord.
Val. I pray, be plain.
La Foy. I ſtand engag'd for ſuch unbounded favour,
That 'twere to be ungrateful to be dumb,
On what concerns your honour.
Val. Honour!— how?
La Foy. Serious and penſive in my morning walk,
Led through theſe covering groves and hid between 'em,
I ſaw your daughter and Aumele——
Val. How, ſaw 'em?
La Foy. Cloſe as the grove they kiſs'd in.
Val. Kiſs'd in, ſoldier!
La Foy. Faith, I'm no orator;
Knew I a word more kind than kiſs, you'd had it.
Val. I hope you ſaw no guilt, beyond that promiſe.
La Foy. She ſtruggl'd, and he preſs'd her; ſhe ſtruggl'd on,
And he preſs'd cloſer. 'Twas no more than woman
Can all, by nature, do as well as ſhe did.
Val. I muſt inform you, Sir, my daughter's modeſty
Diſcredits this bold tale, that ſtains her virtue.
I know not from what quarter to ſuſpect,
Unleſs ſome hatred of Aumele's light race,
Propell'd you to accuſe him. If 'twas ſo,

'Tis

'Tis an ungenerous anger; that for vengeance
'Gainſt an offending foe, forgets the friend.
I will, however, hold a watchful eye
O'er her examin'd conduct; and mean while
Truſt, and demand your ſilence. [*Exit* Valdore *angrily.*

La Foy. Curſe on my wayward fate that ſent me here,
To interrupt their loves—It was ill-breeding.
Some ſoft, cool wit, whom love more warm'd than friendſhip
Had paſt it o'er, or forwarded the buſineſs;
So wiſely gain'd good-will---and pleas'd 'em all.

Enter Chalons.

Chal. Muttering alone, La Foy? what fretful ſcheme,
What melancholy rage of honeſt heart,
Diſturbs thy ſpleen thus early? prithee brighten;
Since Fortune ſmiles at laſt—for ſhame, ſmile with her.
If thou'rt untouch'd within, and know'ſt no joys
Thy own——let mine inſpire thy ſullen temper.

La Foy. Yes---that's a wiſe man's plot---thy joys diſturb me.

Chal. Thou art too good for envy? What then moves thee?
How can a happineſs, like mine, diſtreſs thee?
Married to beauty—reconcil'd to hope;
Splendid in riches——in thy friendſhip happy;
And bleſt by fame and love——what want I more?

La Foy. One thing I'm ſure you want.

Chal. What's that?

La Foy. Diſtruſt
Of woman's wavering love.

Chal. Nay, now thou'rt cynical:
Merits my wife no truſt?

La Foy. Aye——truſt her on.
As to myſelf, I feel no pain for woman:
'Twas for your ſake, I found one not quite angel.

Chal. For my ſake!——be explicit in thy charge,
And eaſe my heart's new anguiſh.

La

La Foy. No—reſt it here:
You are too young a lover—ill prepar'd
For proofs your faith will ſtart from; 'twill unman you.
Chal. What can'ſt thou mean?
La Foy. Why ſhou'd I pull down plagues?
Why ſhould I ſtrike diſeaſes through thy bones,
Beyond the cure of medicine——ſcorch thy blood;
Rob thy torn hours of peace——and ſend in pain?
Better continue blind, than ſee but miſery.
Chal. Thou ſtrik'ſt a deadly coldneſs to my heart.
Point out this foe to life; that, like a man,
I may ſubdue, or bear it. Am I not,
(Cruel La Foy!) was I not bred---a ſoldier?
If it be fate, I'll meet it---if but a fault
That cankers on my mind, I'll cut it off,
Or cure it by my reaſon. Thus adjur'd,
If you continue dumb, you doubt my courage.
La Foy. I've heard that married men find friends in heav'n:
You ſhou'd have many there—pray their kind guard
To keep your fair wife chaſte. [*Is going.*
Chal. Stay—What ſaid'ſt thou?
Take this devouring wolf out of my breaſt.
Stay——or for ever loſe me.
La Foy. Nay——I but go,
Leſt I ſhould loſe thee.
Chal. Have a care thou doſt not;
Thou haſt inflam'd me now——and I will have it.
La Foy. Nay---be content——thou haſt it.
Chal. Death and hell!
Haſt it!——what have I?
La Foy. Why, a fine young wife.
How can I help it, if ſhe too has claims,
Beyond all rights allow'd her.
Chal. Rights! claims!——Furies!
Speak plainly, or thou dy'ſt.
La Foy. Why there 'tis, now!
Was it my fault, that I don't like her kiſſing
The ſon of your wrong'd father's mortal enemy?

Chal.

Chal. Nay, then---the world has no fix'd honour in't;
And he whom moſt I lov'd, is moſt a villain.

La Foy. Hark---my hot child! villain's a wrong, bad word;
Uſe it no more---or, if again thou ſpeak'ſt,
Think twice, who hears---and let no name denote him.

Chal. Nature and name thy own---hear it to heav'n,
Ye ſaints, that waſte no prayer for falſhood damn'd;
Hear it, ye winds, and blow it through his ear,
'Till his heart ſhrinks to feel it ---- that La Foy,
His friend's belyar, his ſtain'd ſword's diſgracer,
Envies ſuperior bliſs ---- and is a villain.

La Foy. Madman, be dumb for ever. Thou haſt ſhrunk
Indeed my feeling heart, and pour'd in horror.
[*Drawing.*] Look here---behold this ſword---bright as the truth
'Tis drawn for---never was it ſtain'd, 'till now;
But, when it wears thy blood, 'twill bluſh for pity.

Chal. Hold---ere thy courage dares this deſp'rate ſtake,
Throw not for life on the bad chance of guilt;
Own but thy falſhood---it ſhall ſtand forgiven.

La Foy. Wittal! thy wife's a wanton---that's truth; keep falſehood,
She'll want it for her dowry.

Chal. Oh! my father! [*Drawing.*
This was your heart's try'd friend; you lov'd him long;
And, with your dying breath, you bad me love him:
Now, from the grave that hides you from his guilt,
If poſſibly thoſe aweful eyes pale beams
Can pierce the marble vault---Oh! ſee me wrong'd,
And groan reluctant licence to revenge it.

La Foy. Amen---to that; where the wrong lies, fall ven-geance.
[*Offering the medal.*] Here---ere I kill thee ---- take back what thou gav'ſt me.
Take all that bears thy virtuous father's image;
Take back this kiſs-worn paper---ſhou'd thy ſword
Force a ſucceſs thy crime's bad cauſe diſclaims,
'Twou'd, if I then retain'd that good man's gift,
Seem drawn againſt thy father. Take it from me!
Tear it, and ſcatter it in air ---- for ever;
So has thy raſhneſs torn the love that bound us.

Chal.

Chal. What wou'd this paper teach me?

La Foy. Teach thee---nothing;
Diſtraction will not learn---it ſhuns to hear.
'Tis the dear, grateful oath he ſign'd and gave me,
On the victorious evening of a day,
Thou dar'ſt not hear me name without a bluſh.
When cover'd o'er with blood, from wounds ill-earn'd,
In thy unthank'd defence---then fall'n and hopeleſs,
Half trampled into earth beneath the hoofs
Of fiery Villeroy's barb'd iron ſquadron;
He ſnatch'd me to his breaſt---hail'd my ſword's labour.
He wept, kind man! wept tears of grateful joy---
Gave that ſeal'd, written oath, to pay me greatly;
Or, ſhou'd he die unable, leave th' oblig'd in charge,
(I ſcorn to name him) bound himſelf to pay me.
Well has he paid his father's vow!---quick---tear it,
Let not the bond upbraid thee. Cancel that,
Since thou haſt blotted me; then, if I fall,
The payment I declin'd in life---dies too.

Chal. [*Drops his ſword.*] Oh! all ye bliſsful angels, who have ſeen me,
What horror am I 'ſcap'd from!

La Foy. Raiſe thy fall'n point.

Chal. Not for a thouſand wrongs wou'd I reſiſt thee.
Periſh th' unlift'ning rage of human pride,
That burns up kind remembrance!---wound me---kill me;
'Tis but to take your own---the life you ſav'd me.
Generous La Foy!---brave hearts make room for pity!
Say but I'm pardon'd, and I'll dare look up,
Meet thy offended eyes---and hear thee chide me.
Why was love touch'd too roughly?

La Foy. [*Putting up his ſword.*] Did I?---faith,
I half begin to doubt I was to blame———
But 'twill be always thus in womens matters;
Clap one of thoſe white make-bates 'twixt two pigeons,
You turn 'em into vultures.

Chal. You ſay ſtrangely,
My wife gave wanton freedoms, to the ſon
Of my worſt enemy?---Sure 'twas impoſſible!

La

La Foy. Likely enough—we'll walk and waſte an hour
On ſome freſh ſubject; air our glowing bloods,
'Till they grow cool as reaſon; then reſume
That feathery theme, and find its weight anon.
Think—have you mark'd no favour from her eye,
When it ſurvey'd Aumele?

Chal. Aumele has long
Made boaſt of her attachment to his folly;
But, as 'twas folly taught him to believe it,
I charg'd it to his lightneſs.——Yet—'twas odd,
When the prieſt join'd our hands, ſhe dragg'd her's back,
Trembling and cold; then rais'd it to her eyes,
Cover'd an ill-tim'd tear, and ſigh'd profound.
Let me conſider—— [*Pauſes.*

La Foy. Do; and this do further.
If ſhe has guilt, and you dare ſearch it boldly,
Truſt my advice——make light of my grave jealouſy:
Laugh when you tell it her——call it the blunder
Of an uncourtly taſte, not broke to gallantry.
I will contrive Belgard, the honeſt hater
Of Aumele's ſhameleſs riots, ſhall be ſent,
As from his father, to require your preſence
For two whole days, to wait th' aſſembled ſtates.
Obey the ſummons with aſſum'd regret,
Mourning ſuch tedious abſence. Then take leave,
And go no farther than to Belgard's brother's.
But have a care——women have ſubtle piercings;
Kiſs warm at parting—cloſer—longer—kinder:
Squeeze a more hard, blind lover's hug, than ever.

Chal. I will.

La Foy. Then leave the reſt to me.

Chal. Oh! what a bliſs might marriage hopes create,
Were but its joys as permanent as great!
[*Exeunt omnes.*

ACT

ACT IV. SCENE I.

An Anti-chamber in Valdore's *House.*

Enter Florella *and young* Aumele.

For. YOU a young lover, and ſo near his miſtreſs—
And ſhe aſleep too--and ſtand wiſely doubting!
Go, and protect your fears within yon night-gown;
Then ſafely fill your abſent rival's place:
Darkneſs can tell no tales——if rapture does not:
If you muſt ſpeak, take care you don't too ſoon;
Wiſe women know, miſtakes once paſt are helpleſs.

Aum. But where's that ſullen friend? Did he go with him?

Flor. No, no--theCount's kind, undiſtruſting goodneſs,
Thank'd the rough ſoldier's too officious ſight,
The huſband's uſual way——and check'd his error.

Aum. Impoſſible!

Flor. What can be ſo to woman?——
Drown'd in due tears, and rack'd by ſtrong deſpair,
Fled from the garden to her chamber's ſhelter,
She tore her hair, beat wild her beauteous boſom;
Curs'd every ſleeping ſtar, that watch'd not innocence;
Wounded the ſenſeleſs floor with bleeding nails,
As if ſhe plough'd up graves to cover ſhame.
Juſt in this tempeſt of ungovern'd rage,
In comes th' all-huſhing huſband; kiſs'd her to ſtillneſs,
And every whirlwind's wing grew fledg'd with down;
Soft ſent his head on her hard-heaving boſom,
While in an eager, doubt-diſpell'd embrace,
He broke the chain of fear that held her dumb.

Aum. No more of their embracing——paſs that by.

Flor. He told her all the rough La Foy's report,
But laugh'd at, while he told it——Generous ſpouſe!
He ſcorn'd to ſee too clear—'twas wronging love!

Sorry he was (and there the jeſt grew pang-full)
That, for two endleſs ages —— two ——long—nights!
He muſt, that moment, leave her. All the reſt
I have already told you; and thus near her,
I dare not truſt, in my conſtraint of muſcles,
To tell it o'er again—for I ſhall laugh;
Nay, laugh too loud —— and if ſhe wakes, all's over.

Aum. By Cupid's dart,
I love thee for thy virtues! Thy keen rays
Of ſparkling wantonneſs have fir'd my fancy,
And I could kiſs thee into tenfold extaſy!
[*Kiſſes her eagerly.*

Flor. Pſha! mind your buſineſs, my French man of ſtraw;
Soon kindled, ſoon burnt out—The proverb knew ye.

Aum. Well—thou ſhalt ſee I am a judge's ſon;
I will be ſtay'd, and reverend —— But let me once
Catch thee behind the curtain of occaſion,
And if there's judge or ſerjeant 'mongſt 'em all
Makes ſweeter uſe of darkneſs —— I'm his client.
Heav'n ſave me! what a dreadful thought was that?

Flor. My lady and myſelf, alone inhabit
This right wing of the manſion—You may ſecure
Undreſs in the next chamber; two doors farther
You'll find your hope ſoft ſleeping. Take the night-gown,
She'll dream the Count return'd. Keep your voice under;
Short murm'rings paſs for eloquence in love.
Whiſper, whene'er you give her breath for queſtion,
That you receiv'd freſh orders, and return'd.

Aum. Sweet oracle!—Hadſt thou been born in Greece,
Cupid were King of Delphos. Here, eat gold ——
Melt the whole purſe. [*Gives her a purſe.*

Flor. One hint more I'll give you——
When you ſucceed, triumphant in your ſcheme,
Own, in ſoft tumult, and with humbleſt joy,
The pleaſing theft —— Leſt, ignorant of that,
She might blab ſecrets in a huſband's ear,
Wou'd ſet his brains a madding. Timely warn'd,

She

She will be glad to bury what is paſt;
And for her own ſake, or for yours, conceal it.
Aum. No more, but truſt me to my fate---Away;
I can no longer my fierce joys delay;
Too ſwiftly ended, with approaching day.
[*Exeunt ſeverally.*

Enter La Foy, *ſoftly.*

La Foy. By the Count's maſter-key I've paſt three doors;
Yet fail to find this cloſet. 'Tis no matter,
I'm ſure I've ſprung my quarry——So there needs
No covert, from a game already ſtarted.
How ſhall I act? If I alarm the houſe,
And he once more eſcapes, Valdore's blind truſt
In this chaſte daughter's modeſty, will break
His ſpleen with laughter —— and conclude me mad.

Enter Chalons, *penſive.*

Hark! there's ſome cautious ſtep!——It muſt be he;
He enter'd with a view, that bids tread ſoft——
Guilt ſtands in need of ſilence. May this
Good ſword and arm for ever fail me,
If he out-lives this meeting ——
Chal. Who is there?
La Foy. Shrink from thy horrid purpoſe, fatal ſword!
Is not that voice Chalons'?
Chal. La Foy!
La Foy. The ſame.
Speak ſoftly—Why are you come hither, now?
You promiſ'd to be patient, and expect
'Till I return'd to call you;
Chal. Is ſhe innocent?
I glow with pain to wait the dear, wiſh'd news;
I dare be ſworn, you found her watchful virtue,
Beſieging Heav'n with pray'rs for my return.
How have you mark'd her buſied? All was hush'd,

As through the private grot I paſs'd unſeen;
All was ſerene as peace. Still midnight nods,
And nothing breathes in this lull'd houſe like guilt.
La Foy. I hope, all's well--and wiſh you wou'd be gone.
Chal. Be gone firſt, ſelf tormenting jealouſy!
Thou dire camelion, that from air's each blaſt
Catcheſt new colours——and deceiv'ſt to live!
Honeſt La Foy——'tis generous, as a God,
To change hard haſty doom—and make it mercy.
La Foy. In mercy too, ſome fears I yet retain;
Remitted——but not cur'd. Go——my heart bleeds,
And ſhuns to tell thee more——Go hence, this moment.
Chal. Nay, then there's fate!
La Foy. You'll make it fate, by ſtaying.
Chal. Anſwer me only this.
La Foy. Be brief——propoſe it.
Chal. What have you ſeen---of what I dread to hear?
LaFoy. Beſt friend--your ſorrows make you doubly ſuch.
Chal. Go on: I find then there is cauſe for ſorrow.
La Foy. Oh! wou'd to Heaven there was not. I have ſeen
(Oppreſs'd by all thy miſeries made my own,
How can I tell thee) thy fond faith's miſplac'd.
I love thee more than ever; for I add
My pity to my friendſhip.——
Thou muſt prepare thy honeſt heart for woe.
Here, like a ghoſt that haunts its hidden treaſure,
With melancholy glide thou ſtalk'ſt along,
Fond of the dirty earth thou tak'ſt for gold.
Chal. If thou haſt pity, torture me no longer.
La Foy. Scarce had I turn'd the corner of the ſtreet
That fronts this fatal houſe——ere I beheld
Swift paſſing by me, muffled from their note,
Amelia's faithleſs favourite maid, Florella;
And cloſe behind her, as ſin follows hard
Upon temptation's heels, on ſtalk'd Aumele.
I ſaw 'em enter——ſaw the door ſhut ſoftly:
Watch'd, 'till the lights extinguiſh'd ſhew'd all quiet;
Then follow'd, by the way you lately taught me.

He's

He's ſtill within; if you, without much noiſe,
Search cloſe, you'll find him cloſer. If he ſtarts,
I'll ſeize him at his out-ſhot.

Chal. Give me thy ſword.

La Foy. I'll keep it for your uſe--but not your folly.

Chal. If you refuſe it now, you ſtain my fame.

La Foy. You know I wear it, but to ſerve your cauſe;
Let me go with it, you command it freely.

Chal. I ſhall be ſham'd for ever, if thy raſhneſs
Denies to truſt me with it.

La Foy. So adjur'd,
I am no more its maſter——Uſe it wiſely.

Chal. Go, and be ſafe then—by the way you came.
Take my repentant thanks for all paſt goodneſs,
[*Embracing* La Foy.
And pardon your poor friend, that--once--he wrong'd you.
Oh! my La Foy, they who have ſoldiers' hearts,
Unmingled with the lovers', never felt
The ſoft'ning pangs of tenderneſs we ſuffer.
Did you but know to what exceſs of joy
I rais'd my fooliſh hope, from this lov'd woman,
You wou'd forget my fault——and call it weakneſs.

La Foy. Before you let your paſſion looſe once more,
Take care it not deceives you. Heedfully
Convince yourſelf of wrongs, we now but fear:
And, above all, be mindful ſhe's a woman.

Chal. Yet once embrace me, dear, too kind La Foy.
If we muſt meet no more——tell the hard world
My wrongs—and vindicate an injur'd name.
[*Exit, as into the chamber.*

La Foy. I'll hover near, and hold attentive note
On what may want prevention. Swords us'd raſhly,
May juſtify intruſion every where.
I haunt no beauty's bed-chambers—Pray Heav'n
He finds not Amele does.——I rais'd my voice
Higher than prudence ton'd it, purpoſely
To warn eſcape from danger.——Troth, this pain
Wounds my poor friend, beyond the cauſe's claim:

I cou'd half hate myſelf, for having given it.

[*A noiſe of footſteps within.*

That's a new ſtep, and near me; by its ſound,
'Tis from a different quarter.

Enter Florella, *frighted.*

Flor. Sure! I heard
Some noiſe—and, if my fear deceiv'd me not,
The hum of buſy voices. Now 'tis huſh'd;
And I almoſt dare hope, 'twas but the echo
Of the wind's hollow groan, through empty chambers.
I'll venture liſt'ning at the inner door;
Leſt ſome alarm has reach'd them.

[*Paſſing near* La Foy, *he ſeizes her.*

La Foy. Who art thou,
That thus, in dead of night, with robber's tread,
Steal'ſt to ſome purpos'd ſcene of frighted guilt?

Flor. Say rather, what preſuming ruffian's graſp,
With-holds me from my duty?—Who, or what thou
May'ſt be, my trembling heart wants power to gueſs,

La Foy. I know thy raven's croak.

Flor. I am call'd Florella;
Attendant on the Counteſs of Chalons.

La Foy. Thou art the brib'd ſhe-bawd that led Aumele,
Hopeful of livelier paſtime, to the ſword,
That his vain penitence and puniſh'd vanity
Have fail'd to ſave his youth from.

Flor. Heav'n forbid!
Alas! is Aumele dead?

La Foy. How dar'ſt thou doubt it?

Flor. Who murder'd him?

La Foy. Say, 'twas La Foy.

Flor. I knew
Thy voice, but too, too well.

La Foy. Thou'rt come to die;
I waited but 'till Heav'n's juſt anger ſent thee,
For thou art doom'd to follow.

Flor.

Flor. Oh! for pity!
Spare my defenceleſs life. I will kneel, weep,
Beg mercy undeſerv'd—and tell thee all.
La Foy. Has the unhappy Counteſs e'er before
Been guilty with Aumele?
Flor. No——by my ſoul!
Nor is ſhe guilty now.
La Foy. Play'ſt thou at riddles?
Flor. Hark! what's that frightful noiſe! I hear claſh'd ſwords,
And die with apprehenſion.
La Foy. Go——I want leiſure,
But ſhall examine further. Do but prove
Thy Lady innocent, and claim ſome pity.
Which is the Count's gilt cloſet?
Flor. See it there.
La Foy. I have the key—in——enter——and be ſafe,
Lock'd from eſcape or danger; 'till I ripen
The growing diſtant hope, that may releaſe thee.
[*Shuts her in the cloſet. Takes the key, and puts it in his pocket.*
And now, forgetful of all forms, I ruſh
To interpoſe prevention. [*Is going—Starts.*
Horrid hand!

Enter Chalons, *his ſword drawn and bloody.*

Eyes horrid! mien confus'd——and that ſword bloody,
Make needleſs all enquiry.
Chal. He is dead.
La Foy. Alas! too ſure you found him! Oh, 'twas thoughtleſs!
What will his father, what Valdore, what law,
Misjudging cenſure, and the public tongue,
What will the world and Heav'n——conceive of this?
Chal. I did not kill him baſely.
La Foy. Where is your wife? [name
Chal. I've given her to the winds---They'll blow her
Round the four borders of her country's ſcorn.

La Foy. Joyleſs Chalons !--you kill'd him in her bed ?
Chal. No, not in bed---I found him kneeling near it.
He ſigh'd, and kiſs'd her hand with amorous boldneſs,
Mutt'ring his tranſports o'er it. Oft, in vain,
He try'd to interrupt her torrent rage
Of agoniz'd reproach, and conſcious ſhame.
Cruel, unkind Aumele ! I heard her ſay ;
How can I ſee the ſun, when day-break comes ?
How meet my injur'd huſband's dreadful eyes,
My reverend father's tears, my friends diſdain,
The hoot of the light rabble's cutting ſcorn,
And all the killing anguiſh I muſt owe thee ?
Go —— for if here, by ſome diſaſt'rous chance,
Diſcover'd—'twill undo me. Patience bore it,
Even to this madding length——— 'twas all it cou'd,
And I was tame no longer.
La Foy. 'Twas indeed
Too much for injur'd excellence, like thine,
To bear, from blind depravity of taſte,
That left to feed upon a boundleſs lawn,
And brows'd on a dry common !
Chal. Out, at once,
Burſt my relentleſs rage. Swift ſtept I to him,
Sending my honeſt ſword before——that ne'er,
'Till then, had arm'd a hand unworthy. Take,
I cry'd, regardleſs of the ſhrieks ſhe rais'd,
Take a defence undue——protect thy vileneſs———
Nor let me baſely kill, tho' baſely wrong'd.
He roſe--leap'd back, and wonder'd--Paus'd, ſtood dumb,
And, for awhile, declin'd his urg'd defence.
"I ſhould not," he began—— and purpos'd more,
"In ſuch a cauſe as this"——I ſtopp'd him ſhort———
Pour'd in reproach, and rous'd him into firmneſs.
He, in his turn, grew hot——came fiercely on——
Met the vindictive point——Sigh'd loud, and fell.
La Foy. Trembling I aſk—raſh, violent Chalons !
Aſk with a friend's too apprehenſive dread ;
Aſk, ſince I muſt prepare my ear for anguiſh,

What

What follow'd this beginning?——The offence
Was bitter——bitterer ſtill th' offender's fate!
Oh, 'twas enough!——and aſk'd no weak partaker.
Chal. Eaſe that ungrounded pain--I cou'd not wound her.
Oh! had'ſt thou ſeen, and heard, thou had'ſt not fear'd it.
Speechleſs with horror——waſting fruitleſs tears;
Trembling, with force that ſhook the curtains round her;
Wringing her hands, in half-rais'd attitude,
And bending o'er the bed, through night's pale gleam,
She mark'd the bleeding form, and ey'd it ghaſtly.
"Cruel, loſt, ſhameleſs wanton!—Oh!" I cry'd,
"I want a name to ſpeak thee!——Shou'd I kill thee,
"What marble heart of cenſure durſt reproach me:
"But I remember what thou, wanton, did'ſt not;
"And for thy ſex, I ſpare thee. Be this room
"Thy priſon, 'till that venerable judge,
"Thy own ſhock'd father, ſentence, or releaſe thee."
There, as I turn'd to go, th' unhappy ſtarter
Sprung from her pillow, caught my feet, and held 'em;
Clung, like her beauty's influence, faſt and painful;
Hung her dragg'd weight on my retarded knees,
That, trembling, ſcarce ſuſtain'd me. At the door,
Fainting and hopeleſs, ſhe relax'd her hold.
I ſnatch'd th' afflicting moment, ſhook her from me;
And, priſon'd in her chamber, left her captive,
Companion of a flatterer cold and dumb,
And now grown taſteleſs of a Lady's liking.
La Foy. Poor, poor Amelia!, what a fate is yours!
How fall'n, from yeſter morning's awe-mix'd ſhine,
Of white untainted beauty——Since 'tis thus,
I muſt approve the ſad appeal propos'd,
To an impartial judge, at once, and father:
His influence too, in your judicial proceſs,
Will ballance, and 'twill all be needful there,
The vengeance of a judge leſs juſt than he,
Chal. Too generous, ill-rewarded, lov'd Valdore!
How ſhall my ſick'ning ſoul find ſtrength to meet him!
I cannot——'Tis impoſſible.

La Foy,

La Foy. 'Tis neceſſary:
Leave to my care that melancholy duty;
I'll bring him firſt prepar'd to ſtand the ſhock.
Chal. But break not in on his too ſhort repoſe;
Shake not his unſuſpecting heart abruptly;
Wait 'till his uſual hour of waking comes:
'Twill be too ſoon, however long delay'd,
To ſigh ſuch ſorrows to him.
La Foy. I'll go liſten. [*Exit.*
Chal. Oh what a change can one ſhort hour beſtow!
To bury man's beſt hopes in endleſs woe!
Beauty's frail bloom's a cheat! Valour's brief fame
An empty ſound——the ſhadow of a name!
Riches are envy's bait—Scorn haunts the poor——
In death alone, from pain we reſt ſecure. [*Exit.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

The Anti-chamber.

Chalons *on the floor, half rais'd, and weeping.*

Chal. WHY ſhou'd it be a ſin, when life grows painful,
To end it, and to truſt futurity?
Whom can the wretched here offend above,
By haſt'ning to hereafter?——Guilt, indeed,
Might pale th' expiring murd'rer's conſcious cheek,
Ghaſtly with fear to meet the dead man's eye,
Now glaz'd, to glare a vengeance——But the wrong'd,
The ſoul-ſick ſufferer——the deſpis'd—th' inſulted——
The poor, pin'd boneling, that, grown old in want,
Begs his cold draught, and drinks it mix'd with ſcorn;
What have theſe groundling windfalls of the world,
To fear from future tempeſts?——Out, falſe meteor!
Faithleſs in every form——This life deludes us.
Valour's but pride's big bubble. Honeſty,
The plain man's devious path to ſhun proſperity.

Learning

Learning and wit (not proſtitutes to power)
Are marks for ſhafted envy. Beauty (curſe her!)
Lures us to every chace of every joy,
That every plague may blaſt us—Love's blind fool-mark
Stamp'd on the Almighty's weaken'd image, man,
Tempts but a woman's miſchief.—Down, proud worms!
Fill your ſtretch'd mouths with duſt——and farewel all.
[*Throws himſelf proſtrate.*

Enter Valdore *and* La Foy.

La Foy. See! my good Lord, where on the floor extended,
Torn by too fierce a ſenſe of ſtrong diſtreſs,
The mournful miſery of his fate has caſt him!

Val. Leave this dejected bed of humble ſorrow——
For her, who—from thine ſofter——ſadly fell;
Fell, e'en too ſtain'd and low for this laſt refuge.

La Foy. Find the forgotten firmneſs of thy brow,
And with a manly meekneſs meet compaſſion.
Who, that e'er lov'd a woman, liv'd exempt
From weakneſs that o'er-rates her?—Eye, Chalons!
Is this that fam'd enliv'ner of the field,
Whoſe heart grew ſprightly at the trumpet's call?
Oh! I have ſeen thee war againſt diſtreſs;
Charge home, on ſoftneſs and fatigue at once,
And conquer in both onſets. Come, come, riſe;
Shift this ſad ſcene of ſhame: change it for views
Of opening glory——that ſhall dazzle pain.
Look up——the reverend witneſs of thy weakneſs
Hides his own's heart's diſtreſs, to comfort thine.

Chal. [*Half rais'd.*) Oh! my afflicted father!——
That I thus
Dare face the ſorrows on that aweful brow,
(Which but for generous pity of my woes,
Had felt no home-born pang)—requires more courage,
Than ever warm'd the veins of warring youth.

Val. Reach me thy hand—Lean on my feeble aid;
And, every way confiding, taſk my help.

Chal. Too much already have I taſk'd thy goodneſs;
Too ill have I repay'd its waſted care.

How

How can I look on miſeries I have made!
When I was ſunk beneath loſt mercy's hope;
Found by no far-ſtrain'd eye —— this hand's kind ——,
Took pity on my wants; ſtretch'd out relief,
And drew me from a priſon's joyleſs gloom.

Val. No more of that ſad tale —— forget it, now;
One far more ſad repels it.

Chal. Never, never,
Will I forget the hand's kind help that ſav'd me:
From all this deep diſtreſs you call'd me up;
Chac'd inſult, grinding poverty, and ſhame;
Heal'd ev'ry inſelt ſting contempt can wound with;
Gave me your power, friends, fortune—gave me—Oh!--
How ſhall I, trembling, add—gave me your daughter!

Val. Worſe than I fear'd--La Foy thou haſt deceiv'd me.
Cruel Chalons! —— Since ſhe deſerv'd to die,
Had but her ſhame dy'd with her, I had ſtrove
To hold back nature's tax —— theſe father's tears,
And labour'd to forgive thee.

Chal. Sir! but hear me.

Val. 'Tis needleſs--What have artful words to do
With a pain'd parent's anguiſh? Sooth not me
With unavailing flattery. Let vain youth
Taſte falſe mens frothy praiſes —— Age is wiſer:
Age has experience in ſuch fruitleſs wiles ——
Will not be flatter'd—knows, that raſh revenge
Is blinder than tranſgreſſion —— How am I ſure
My daughter was not innocent? —— The jealous
Dream that they ſee beſt —— when darkeſt.

La Foy. My Lord, my Lord,
Lend you ear calmly.

Val. Had he but let her live to own her guilt;
Had I but read it in her ſilent eye,
I had forgiven him both —— yet one too much.
He ſnatch'd the ſword from the wrong'd hand of law.
And plung'd it in the ſtrong's unſentenc'd breaſt:
The weak ſhou'd have eſcap'd--and touch'd his mercy.

La Foy. Give him his way, miſtaken grief impels him;
Anon, he will be juſter.

Val,

Val. Juſter!——Juſter!——
What juſtice has he right to?---Juſtice, ſay'ſt thou?
What juſtice can th' ungrateful ſquand'rer plead,
That ruins his redeemer?---Has he not
Pour'd miſery on my dotage? All my joys,
The poor faint remnants of an old man's gleanings,
For his few, feeble wiſhes! at one blow,
Cut from their tender root, deſtroy'd for ever!
Oh! 'twas a black return---to me, who lov'd him!
What, tho' he knew not half her claims to pity,
He ſhou'd have felt for me. I lov'd---I watch'd her;
Rais'd her from prattling infancy, to wonder!
She touch'd my charm'd (perhaps too partial) heart.
I priz'd her own ſweet bloom---ſtill more endear'd,
By her dead mother's likeneſs. He ſhou'd have ſtopp'd,
When his fell point was rais'd, and thought whoſe pangs
Were to partake his ſuff'rings.

Chal. Had ſhe been dead---
Had ſhe---(but, oh! ſhe is not)----been partaker
Of her loſt paramour's diſaſtrous fate;
Think then---oh! then---how had my horror torn me;
Who ſcarce ſupport, with life, th' undue reproach.

Val. What ſays he, my La Foy? Does he not mean
That my Amelia lives!

La Foy. She does, my Lord:
I told you that before; but your ſad heart
Repell'd the offer'd comfort.

Val. Generous Chalons!
Scarce has the daughter's crime more wrong'd thy goodneſs
Than did the father's anguiſh.

Chal. Oh! my dear Lord——
Cou'd ſome deſcending angel but reſtore
Her innocence (for ever loſt!)---lend peace
Of mind once more---and make life taſteful to her;
To ſuch exceſs of fondneſs am I her's,
That I wou'd burn diſcernment's eyes to blindneſs,
Rather than ſee a fault, in one ſo lov'd---
So much has this day's torture coſt my ſoul!

La Foy. Chalons, thou haſt a ſure friend's voice in heav'n. My

My General oft wou'd ſay---" Pray, ſoldiers, pray;
" If you deſerve ſucceſs--'Tis yours for aſking."
Alas! I have too ſeldom try'd this power;
Who knows, but ſome ſuch angel as you wiſh'd for,
(I am no teazing, troubleſome invoker)
May in your cloſet, on my prayer deſcend,
And whiten the ſtain'd name that paints your love.
[*Goes, and unlocks the cloſet.*

Val. Poor man---thy griefs have touch'd thy pitying friend,
'Till his hurt brain grows frantic.

La Foy. Appear, thou wing-clipt dæmon!---If thou hop'ſt
To ſhun the doom that waits perdition's tribe,
Waſh thy ſav'd ſoul from all its native black,
And take an angel's form--Truth's convert friend.
[La Foy *leads out* Florella.

Val. What means this?---Florella!

Flor. I once was Florella;
But Heav'n has touch'd my heart with will ſo new,
That my old name offends me.

La Foy. Anſwer, firſt,
Truly and briefly, as when late I caught thee,
Skulking through night's lone gloom, that wanted ſhade
To ſuit thy darker purpoſe---Anſwer, plainly,
Is thy unhappy Lady innocent,
In Aumele's dire admiſſion to her chamber?
Or, is ſhe guilty of it?

Flor. Innocent.

Val. How!---Innocent?

Chal. A wife---her huſband abſent,
Admits a lover in his room, at midnight---
Found in her chamber, in a looſe diſ-robe:
Nay, in the huſband's night-dreſs——Yet all this,
Thy venal evidence (falſe maid!) calls innocence!

La Foy. Pray let her ſpeak. My Lord, you are a judge;
Shou'd an accuſer brow-beat witneſſes,
Or interrupt their anſwers? [*To* Valdore.

Chal. Nay, La Foy;

Pity,

Pity, thus forc'd, grows insult. I have told thee,
I heard her loud reproach confess the guilt,
To am'rous Aumele, when kneeling by her bed.
She call'd him cruel Aumele —— Bid him begone;
For, if he there was found, her name was blasted.
La Foy. Away with such strain'd proofs. Had I myself
Been there, but on some far more honest purpose,
Poor soul! she might have said the same to me;
When blund'ring accident alone had brought me.
Val. I think, Chalons, you said that Aumele knelt
But near Amelia's bed —— Was it not more?
Flor. Had it been more —— She still were innocent;
Unconscious of his coming. I alone
Was guilty. I (betray'd by bribe's profusion)
Admitted the deaf, head-strong, thoughtless lover,
Both to the house and chamber. I advis'd
The night-gown's needful cover. I gave notice
Of your wrong'd Lordship's absence; taught him how
To personate your chanc'd return; soft whispering,
That if she wak'd not ere he reach'd her bed,
Whate'er succeeded, might be meant for you.
La Foy. Now, now, Chalons! what now becomes of all
Those mad mis-proofs of guilt she shines untouch'd by?
By Heav'n! 'tis plain, to me, she wak'd too full
Of your remember'd image, to mistake
For that th' intruder's loath'd one. She reproach'd
Not her accomplish'd, but intended, ruin:
And tho' the traitor not unjustly fell,
His crime was nobly, by her guarded virtue,
Prevented, and ideal.
Flor. Never breath'd
A virtue more untainted. May my soul,
In time's last dreadful judgment meet no mercy,
If ever wife more faithful bless'd a husband;
Or, with more cautious conduct, fear'd a lover.
Val. Oh! what hast thou deserv'd —— if this her due?
Chal. Pity, forgiveness —— A safe-bought retreat,
To some sweet convent's silent space for prayer:
For penitence to Heav'n —— and 'scape from shame.

More

More ſhall be her's; for, oh! my gracious Lord,
'Tis by her juſt amends for caſt-off ſin,
Your own paternal tenderneſs——my love——
And my brave, honeſt, generous friend's compaſſion,
Are all redeem'd, at once, from deep deſpair.
Go, fly Florella——Take this guilty key——
Tell the poor captive innocent this tale;
And court her to be bleſs'd, by bleſſing all.
[*Gives her the key, and exit* Florella.

Val. [*Kneeling.*] Thou ever gracious, ever preſent Power!
That, firſt, inſpires our virtue——loves it not;
And guards it, in concluſion!——Take, oh! take
An old man's aweful thanks, for days prolong'd;
Days doom'd, by grief, to pain——now ſav'd for joy!

Chal. [*Kneeling*] From me (moſt worthleſs of the mercy ſhewn)
Accept, all-worſhip'd Author of all bliſs!
The pour'd-out heart's whole tide of grateful pray'r.

La Foy. Let me not ſeem leaſt ſenſible of zeal,
Becauſe leſs taught to ſpeak it. [*Kneels too.*]——Had I words,
I wou'd adore Heav'n eloquently——(Now)——
Receive a plain blunt heart's ſincereſt thanks,
For more than I deſerve——or know to tell.

Florella *within ſpeaks.*

Flor. Oh! horror! horror!---Comfort comes too late;
Death intercepts relief——and help is vain.

All ſtart up in confuſion; and La Foy, *running out, meets and aſſiſts* Florella, *leading in* Amelia *bleeding.*

Chal. Defend me from this viſion's ghaſtly menace,
Or I am loſt again!

Val. Hapleſs Amelia!
What has thy raſhneſs done? Juſt Heav'n, but now,
Hear'd our given thanks—Thy innocence ſtood clear'd.
Florella guilty, prov'd thy virtue wrong'd:
And, in this ill-choſen criſis of our joy,

Thou

Thou murder'ſt thy own bleſſing!

Amel. [*Kneeling to* Valdore.] Heaven was too kind!
That eas'd my honour'd father's aching ſenſe,
Of a loſt daughter's ſhame! Death, in this thought,
Robb'd of its ſharpeſt ſting, grows half a friend.
[*To* Chalons; *who raiſes her, weeping.*] Oh! too unkind
Chalons!——What ſhall I ſay——
What ſhall diſtruſted honour——think——of thee?
I cannot,—muſt not—blame——thy dreadful rage:
Appearance was againſt me——Ah! ebb flow,
My offer'd blood——Give my ſick, trembling heart
One moment's ſhort reprieve——to clear my name.

Chal. Pauſe, my faint, injur'd charmer—thy clear'd name,
Is ſpotleſs as thy beauty.

Val. Save thy ſhook ſpirits.

Chal. Florella! fly——Go call immediate aid.

La Foy. No—let her ſtay—I'll haſte myſelf, my Lord.
[*Exit* La Foy.

Val. How haſt thou given thy breaſt that fatal wound?

Amel. Shut up with horror, and bound in with death,
'Twas natural to deſpiſe familiar fear.
Shunning the breathleſs corpſe, that clogg'd my way,
I ſtumbled o'er a ſword——thus learnt its uſe——
And thank'd it, for eſcape from dreaded ſhame.
Living, and hopeleſs to attract belief,
To the unhappy ſtory of my woe;
The eye of ev'ry gazer's dumb reproach,
Had given a ſharper wound, than this I choſe.

Val. Did'ſt thou diſcover the vile youth's diſguiſe?
Or—wert thou ſleeping, and unconſcious found,
When his bold craft ſurpriz'd thee?

Amel. Troubled thoughts,
For my departed Lord's ſo ſudden abſence,
Chas'd from my eye-lids wiſh all power of ſleep.
Anxiouſly doubtful for his ſafe return,
Alarm'd by apprehenſion's buſy fears,
And wond'ring what ſtrange haſty cauſe had call'd him—
I ſtarted——when the door's ſoft-opening ſound
Gave glanc'd admiſſion to th' intruſive tread.

Poring, I ſhook with terror——for I ſaw
(By the pale, gleamy, ghoſt-like glaze of light)
That nor the force nor freedom ſhew'd that eaſe
Of manly grace, that marks my mienful lord.

Chal. Oh! I was born to curſes—thus to wrong
Such tenderneſs of virtue!

Amel. Twice I rais'd
My frighted voice——and twice he try'd, in vain,
To ſooth it into ſilence. Failing that,
Grew fearful of diſcovery—pauz'd amas'd,
Stepp'd back—return'd—ſtood doubtful—'till at laſt,
He threw himſelf on his preſumptuous knees,
As (my dear angry lord) you found, and heard him.
Nearer than that (by the bleſt hopes I haſte to!
When, from this world of grief I riſe to peace!)
He never had approach'd me.—Ah!—farewel——
My ſwimming eyes, dim'd o'er, have loſt your forms,
And I am cover'd round with dark——thick---ſhadow.

Val. [*Kiſſing her.*] Dear, dying child!---Her lips are cold and pale.
Farewel, too ill-ſtar'd girl!---farewel--for ever.

Chal. She cannot die. Heav'n is too kind, too juſt,
To excellence like her's--to let that be.

Val. Lead, to her chamber---Gently guide her feet,
They loſe--(Oh killing ſight!) their own ſweet motion.
[*Exit* Amelia, *led off* by Chalons *and* Florella.

Enter La Foy, *with* Belgard.

Val. Alas! you're come too late. See, where they lead her---
Lifeleſs, and paſt all ſenſe of art's loſt care.

La Foy. Follow, Belgard; haſte, urge thy utmoſt ſkill:
Snatch her from death--and thou command'ſt my fortune.
[*Exit* Belgard.

Val. I knew Belgard---unknowing of his ſkill.

La Foy. He practis'd many a year, ſav'd many a life,
In war's deep-wounding rage---but peace came on,
And his ſhunn'd virtue ſtarved.--'Twas not him,
I propos'd to have call'd; but met him, coming

T

To warn us, Lord Aumele (who now ſupports him)---
Fir'd at his ſon's preſumptuous levity,
His watch'd admiſſion here, and whole night's abſence,
Comes, with intent to note and tell his practice;
Then take ſuch meaſures as you beſt approve.
Val. What ſhall we do!--He ſeeks a living ſon:
He finds a dead one. Unprepar'd event!
But, he muſt bear his part---and ſhare diſtreſs.
La Foy. 'Twas due to his hard heart.——My curſe (provok'd
For his unfeeling wrong to my dead General)
Falls heavy on his head---to teach him pity.

Enter Chalons *and* Belgard.

Chal. Bleſs'd, my La Foy, be thy ſucceſsful call
Of this good angel's aid!--She wakes!--She breathes!--
He tells me ſhe ſhall live!--Her opening eye
Adds to the morning's light, and ſhines once more.
Val. Then is indulgent Heav'n grown kind indeed.
Bel. The wound, itſelf not mortal, gather'd danger
From weak'ning waſte of blood: her ſpirits, thence,
Loſt vigour to ſuſtain the toilſome length
Of agoniz'd complaint, I'm told, ſhe made.
So, fainting, ſhe ſeem'd dead; but reſt, with aid
Of ſkill'd attention, will reſtore her ſoon.
La Foy. Let us forethink of old Aumele's approach.
Val. I'll juſtify the fate that reach'd his ſon.
La. Foy. Warn'd by that fate, the brutal mind ſhall feel.
Pangs, due to cruel breaſts, with hearts of ſteel
On their own heads ſhall fall woe's driving rain,
And drown too bold contempt of others' pain.
Pity ſhall ſmile, to ſee th' unpitier fall;
And he who aids no want, ſhall ſuffer all.

EPILOGUE.

(By AARON HILL, *Esq*;)

Spoken by AMELIA.

I'VE 'scap'd, to-night, two terrible disasters;
My honour's indignation——and my master's:
And Heaven best knows what hapless hole can hide me,
If (to crown all my woes) your help's deny'd me.
LADIES, *you see how much expos'd our sex is;*
Sleeping, or waking, some sad chance perplexes.
Man's a more wily snake than mother EVE's *was;*
In his own shape——and others too——deceives us.
Hungry devourer! never tir'd with snapping;
Shun him with open eyes——he'll catch us napping:
And how to 'scape him, if I know——ne'er let me
Break thro' th' entangling nets, that thus beset me.
Now, GENTLEMEN, *to your own thoughts appealing*
(Fitter, I doubt, for making wounds—than healing)
What wou'd you have poor women do with honour,
When danger heaps such monstrous loads upon her?
D'ye think in conscience now—half-wak'd, half-weary
With foregone frights, for one's departed deary——
'T had been so strange a crime——or worth such pother,
In darkness to mistake one dear for t'other?
Pray think on't——Put yourselves behind the curtain;
What can't be cur'd must be endur'd——that's certain.
'Tis a fair question—and 'tis plainly ask'd ye:
Answer it—or confess, I've over-task'd ye.
Suppose me bound in sleep's soft, silken fetter,
And one of your dear selves the dark besetter:
Sight has no eyes, at midnight---and, for touches,
"JOAN," *(says the proverb)* "*in the dark's a dutchess.*"
For my part---I can't find we've any senses,
Can furnish such attacks with fit defences.
Let trusty spouse, when business sends him packing
("*Safe bind safe find*") *leave no due caution lacking.*
I see some judge-like eyes, that look too sprightly
To miss a she law-point, put to 'em rightly.
Is mine the court's decree?——I humbly move it;
That, if your hearts affirm——your hands approve it.

LOVE

LOVE LETTERS.

LETTER I.

MADAM,

I Had juſt finiſh'd the incloſed verſes, when I had the honour of receiving yours, dated yeſterday; I am ſcarce more amaz'd at the prodigious force of your genius, than at the ſweetneſs of your nature; reflecting, with compaſſion, on the certain influence of your charms, you temper the pain you give, by a mixture of condeſcenſion.

I came to the houſe, before you, with deſign to ſit conceal'd, and feaſt my eyes on your lovelineſs; as my ſoul had been often entertain'd with your excellence; I thought the bench wou'd hold but three—and when I ſaw three Ladies enter, neither of which was the Lady whoſe idea my mind ſhone with, I felt a melancholy weight at the diſappointment, which fled, immediately upon your entrance, like a miſt, before the ſun-beams.

I believ'd myſelf unknown, 'till at the end of the play, I had the honour to ſalute you. The reaſon you have given for diſcovering me ſooner, has almoſt drawn me to a vanity; which, however, unapt I am to fall into, it was, on this occaſion, ſcarce poſſible to reſiſt. I own I feel ſome pride in the very imagination, that you gueſs'd at me.—Not to appear diſagreeable in the eye of a MIRA, is all the perſonal merit, which it becomes a man to wiſh for.

It is impoſſible to deſcribe you, either in your mind, or your perſon. One may do it in idea—but words give way, like quickſand, beneath too weighty a pile of building. One may *ſee* you for ever, unwearied, and

admiring; but to ſpeak you, is as impoſſible, as to excell you!

It were the buſineſs of an age, to read the learning of your eyes! They let out more meanings, than they take in objects! And to ſtudy the occult ſciences, which may be learnt from their peruſal, will teach me to-morrow night, the moſt enchanting philoſophy.

I am,

with the profoundeſt reſpect,
and admiration,

Madam!

your moſt humble and moſt obedient ſervant,

A. HILL.

To the never enough admir'd Mrs. ———, after ſeeing her at Julius Cæſar.

PLEAS'D to be plac'd, unknown, in MIRA's view,
I gave my eyes free looſe, and gaz'd you through;
Watch'd your unguarded looks, each motion weigh'd,
And, unſuſpected, lurk'd, in ambuſcade:
But, if, unſure, my ſympathetic heart,
Felt you, thro' diſtance, with ideal ſmart,
How ſhall I point the ſtrong, the ſweet, ſurprize,
To ſee you ſtand, confeſs'd, and bleſs my eyes!
Happy, mean while that thoſe doubt-wand'ring beams,
Spread random fires, nor ſhot collected ſtreams,
Scarce I ſuſtain'd her charms' diffuſive ſhine,
While gilding every form, they glanc'd o'er mine,
But, ah! what power ungueſs'd cou'd then protect,
When their whole force, contracted, darts, direct.
Soft are her features, and her air is ſweet,
High majeſty and melting languor meet!
Round her pleas'd mouth impatient Cupids throng,
To ſnatch th' inſpiring muſic from her tongue:

Thick,

Thick, thro' her ſparkling eyes, break unconfin'd,
The wing'd ideas of her crowded mind;
A mind! that burning with inferior glow,
Does her whole form with luſtre overflow!
Still as ſhe ſpeaks—or looks—or moves—new rays
Scatter freſh beauties, in eternal blaze;
Loſt in exceſs of wonder, we retire,
Find words too weak, and ſilently admire.
Judge then, O Muſe! thus aweful, in thy charms,
How my ſoul labour'd with its late alarms;
To ſee you near—to ſee you ſo divine!
Was joy to others' eyes—was pain to mine!
Dubious, perplex'd, with interrupted gaze,
I turn'd my varied looks a thouſand ways.
Reduc'd at length, to one forc'd choice, of two,
To look on Cæſar's murder, or on you;
Slow, my reluctant eyes to diſengage,
I bent 'em, tingling, on the bloody ſtage!
'Tis hard—I ſigh'd—to ſee my fav'rite bleed,
But, 'tis more hard to die, in Cæſar's ſtead.

To the adorable Mrs. ———, in excuſe for not anſwering immediately one of her letters.

CAN heavenly MIRA eaſily forgive!
But why do I that needleſs query make;
Pity, and ſhe, like twin-born ſiſters, live,
And their ſweet union, death alone can break.

Speak then O guilty Muſe, with humble ſound,
Softly approach—and whiſper in her ear;
As criminal thou art, it will be found,
She caus'd thy crime, whoſe power now moves thy fear.

Tho', I confeſs my thanks too long delay'd,
My thanks for bleſſings, which impoveriſh thought,
Yet if ſhe calls compaſſion to her aid,
She'll ſave the guilty penitent ſhe taught.

Ere I beheld her face, with eaſe I writ,
With eaſe cou'd float on paſſion's troubled roll;
But, ſince her eyes have reinforc'd her wit,
Th' unconquer'd fire conſumes my burning ſoul.

So generals, not yet near enough to fight,
Fearleſs diſpatch light parties far and nigh,
But when the foes whole army comes in ſight,
Slow they draw back, and in cloſe ſilence lie.

LETTER II.

MADAM,

THE language of your heart declines all hearers, but the object of its tenderneſs: and, ſince I never ſee you, alone, (but when my dreams are kinder than your lodgings) you muſt give this paper leave to tell you, what I cannot—that the admiration, which I long ſince found your due, now only ſerves to dignify a warmer paſſion: for it became impoſſible again to ſee and hear you, without effects that ſoften'd friendſhip into wiſhes of a dearer nature.

To converſe with you, and yet be patient under theſe neceſſities of often leaving you, is to be wretched, within view of tranſport.—A man, who never once had ſeen you, might live happy in his ignorance: but far from ſuch a happineſs is he, who, after having learn'd from your accompliſhments indifference for all your ſex beſides, is tortur'd by reſtraints, and diſtance, and lives ſeparated from the ſoul you rob him of.

I will not aim at a deſcription of my ſentiments.—They muſt have been unworthy their inſpirer, if words cou'd have the power to make her comprehend them.—Reſpectful, ſoft, endearing years of life, devoted to your taſte,

taſte, and acting for your happineſs, might do, perhaps, ſome little juſtice to the paſſion you impreſs me with; but writing is by far too faint, and diſtance too incapable, to give ideas of your influence.

Receive me therefore, ever yours,—or, be ſo generous to ſave me from this growth of your attraction.—Condemn me never to behold you more; or let me never be depriv'd of ſeeing you.—All repetitions of ſuch pleaſures, as my heart is filled with, when I ſit and liſten to your ſweetneſs, are ſucceeded by new pains, which you can never rightly judge of, becauſe there is no man as worthy your eſteem, as you are of mankind's in general.—I carry with me, from your gentle converſation, a thouſand inexpreſſible remembrances, of words, looks, movements, ſoftneſſes and graces;—— which, compared with the gay female world, make all things taſteleſs in it, but the image of that ſingle lovelineſs, where all thoſe excellencies center.

Since I muſt gather, from the conſequence of this confeſſion of my wiſh, what rank my happineſs may hold in yours,——and ſince it cannot be a difficulty to convey your ſentiments, where they will be ſacred to my boſom only,——be ſo divinely good, as, (with a frankneſs, fit for generous minds, like yours) to let me be inſtructed ——how far I may preſume to hope, your heart's dear confidence (once taſteleſsly rewarded) has the courage to believe again; and truſt the influence of your power—which I was born to feel the force of,—on the ſoul of,

Madam,

your now happy, or unbleſs'd, but always

your moſt faithfully devoted ſervant,

A. HILL.

LETTER

LETTER III.

MADAM,

EVERY new time I ſee you, every new letter I have the bleſſing to receive from you, I gather ſtill new proofs, in juſtice to the ſex you honour, that all their ſofteſt and moſt amiable virtues may conſiſt with all their elevated, and moſt thoughtful.

You look, and write, and act, with ſuch an equal likeneſs to yourſelf, and ſuch a ſweet ſuperiority to all the world beſide, that friendſhip is too cold a paſſion, to do juſtice to your influence; and love too bold a wiſher, when it wou'd aſpire to hope your tenderneſs.

I know not how to diſobey you, ſince my ſoul is in your cuſtody;—yet, do not uſe your power, to the prevention of my future peace.——I can, I muſt forbear to preſs you,—if you will inſiſt upon that ſacrifice!——but I muſt never think of happineſs, after ſuch proof of your indifference.

Why, Madam, are you ſo unjuſt, in your opinion of your own fine mind? Why ſo inſenſible to its angelic covering?——In all the world, but in yourſelf, you are the firſt to find accompliſhments!——Why do you ſpeak of Time? It has but heightened your attractions.—Tho' you were always form'd as now, you were not always ſo ſupremely perfect!——Time has robb'd you of no beauties, in attending you from ſpring to ſummer.—'Tis to that profitable change, your fine ſenſe owes its title to the fruits of this compleater ſeaſon.—Why ſhou'd you, with this delicate unconſciouſneſs, do ſuch injuſtice to your lovelineſs?——You have every thing of gayety, but its light flutter, and its vanities; and you have every thing of wiſdom, but its ſowerneſs and its gravity.

Divinely

Divinely modeſt, and judicious, as you are, you recommend refinement, as a bound to my eſteem; and ſpeak of happineſs as loſt, if carried farther.——But ſurely! all eſteem for you, muſt, of neceſſity, be a refin'd one:—for, while its growth is from your perſonal charms, it has its root in your dear virtues.——There is indeed a happineſs, that may be ſometimes loſt in finding: but, it is the fate of raſh and unweigh'd paſſions. ——I have long been charm'd with, long reflected on my preſent wiſh:—I have felt you at my heart, and held, and preſs'd you to my reaſon.——I have been the lover of your mind and body; and, it is as poſſible to ſenſe, that one, of your inſpiring eyes, ſhou'd cloud the luſtre of the other, as that a heart, which you have touch'd, as you have mine, ſhou'd grow leſs conſcious of your dearneſs, becauſe bleſs'd with your poſſeſſion.

If therefore you inſiſt (which Heaven forbid!) on my obedience to your hard injunction, you can have but one juſt reaſon for your doing ſo;——and I muſt find it in my own unworthineſs.——As for my friendſhip, which you do ſuch honour to, when you declare it worth your keeping,—That muſt be yours, by double claim, when I am alſo bleſs'd with being ſo.——When did you ever think, that light was leſs refin'd, becauſe it had ſome warmth mix'd in it? Why then ſhou'd ſuch a love, as you inſpire, be leſs refin'd than friendſhip? Why, rather, not join'd with it, both to ſtrengthen, and enliven it?

But, what are all theſe reaſonings, if oppos'd to your felicity! I love, with too devoted an attachment, to be happy, while you ſeem to doubt it.——I had rather ſee myſelf for years, unbleſs'd, than you a day uneaſy.---Continue then your generous frankneſs: It ſo charmingly becomes you, that it raiſes your idea, even above your other greatneſſes!——Inform me with it,--if there is not yet ſome ſtronger reaſon than you have expreſs'd?——If it is ſo, I will prefer your quiet, to my own. ---I will ſhew you the refinement of my love, by the

ſubmiſſion

ſubmiſſion (wou'd I cou'd add ſuppreſſion!) of my wiſhes.---But, if your apprehenſion of the common conſequences of unſteady and ill-grounded paſſion, is the only motive of your cold, yet kind advice,---conclude it an impoſſibility, to any weighed, or rational affection; and, therefore, never capable of finding the leaſt room, in the devoted heart you animate.

Your dear invaluable letter came (as all mine do) directly to my hand.---The poſtmen bring me ſeveral at once; and, if I am from home, they are all put together in a little box I keep for that purpoſe.---Your heavenly image, in my heart, is not ſecurer of a ſacred privacy, than every thing you write, is ſure of, in your letters.---And it is with purpoſe that my own ſhou'd find their way to your view only, that I thus incloſe 'em, in ſuch others, as are fit for any eye you pleaſe; theſe being taken out, and honour'd with a happier diſpoſition.

I cannot be at reſt, nor dare indulge myſelf, in the wiſhed joy to meet your eyes, 'till you remove this painful doubt, in which your laſt (all goodneſs as 'twas meant!) has left the heart, of,

Madam,

your unchangeably devoted,

and (from his ſoul) your faithful,

humble ſervant,

A. HILL.

LETTER IV.

My every moment dearer, and ſtill more deſerving to be dear.

THE ſight of that lov'd hand ſuſpended a long week of melancholy: but it return'd, when I had read your letter.

With

With what an unimagin'd cruelty of kindneſs, have you given me advice, about ſome Lady, and call'd that the ſole occaſion of your writing?

The buſy world, I find, is full of eyes and tongues; and you have heard of ſomething, which has had, perhaps, its chief foundation in ſome friend's partiality, or their good wiſhes.——But, what are proſpects which concern but figure in the world, when croſſing the more noble byas of the heart's internal happineſs?---A ſhining miſery is more than miſery, for 'tis a wretchedneſs expos'd, and public: and he who ſells his peace of mind is doubly a betrayer;---he gives up comfort, in exchange for intereſt,---then wrongs the giver of that intereſt, by convincing her, with an ungenerous coldneſs, how incapable he is to reliſh it.

Believe me, always excellent, and truly dear *** theſe outſides of felicity deceive but lookers on. The wearers of 'em know, and feel, what empty maſks they are.---All laſting happineſs in life is lodg'd in what we are,---not in what others think us.---It were as poſſible to taſte by other people's palates, as to be bleſs'd by other people's apprehenſions.---What is there then in figure, further than an independency? A man of ſenſe, who wou'd be rich, has no great difficulties in his way: but he who wou'd be happy has a thouſand. He has, firſt, life's elegancies, and its pleaſures, to diſtinguiſh from its noiſes, and its vanities. He has, next, the great improbability of finding a *** form'd to bleſs, as Heaven meant bleſſings: and, after he has been ſo ſtrangely fortunate as to diſcover this ſoft miracle; he has then her cruel diffidence, and delicacy, to ſurmount: or, like a veſſel loaded with ſome new-found treaſure, ſuffers ſhipwreck in the harbour.

Cou'd I be bleſs'd enough to flatter my devoted heart with the moſt wiſh'd, the deareſt ſenſe of that ſoft ſenſibility, for which my whole ſoul thanks the generous goodneſs of your pen, whence then thoſe fear'd allays?

As

As for the ambitious world, 'tis fashion'd to amuse, not satisfy. It swarms, 'tis true, with company; so has a desert too, its wild society:---but just such melancholy, bustling solitude, as man wou'd undergo, surrounded by that savage turbulency, is his unsocial lot, who misses, in your sex's sound, and show, some sweet resemblance of your loveliness.

Receive this plain-drawn picture, of a heart that knows your worth, and truly feels, and values it. And, that I may demonstrate, as I ought, the influence you hold within it, believe this declaration, from my soul's sincerest depth. I never can forbear to think of you with the same tenderness as now,---nor can I ever hope for happiness, in such a separation as you recommend. But, yet (so much do I prefer you to myself) if you continue to insist that I shou'd struggle to suppress this passion---I cannot, must not, strive to compass an impossibility.---But, I will sacrifice my quiet to your ease---I will be so so far master of my grief, as never to disturb you with it: tho' I shall wish to be at all, no longer, than while you suffer me to be,

Dear Madam,

your most faithful,

and devoted servant,

A. HILL.

LETTER V.

WHAT shall I do, my loveliest, dearest, never to be forgotton, never to be obtain'd *** ? What language shall I find, to represent the situation of a heart so fix'd, yet so divided?

Respectful

Reſpectful to your will, even when it bids me be unhappy, I have tried the two extremes, of buſineſs, and of ſolitude. But, ſtill I ſaw you, in the midſt of crowds, where nothing in the leaſt reſembled you; ſtill met you in retirement, ſo cut off from the ſurrounding world, that ſcarce an object enter'd, but the image of your ſweetneſs.

In every place you interpoſe the ſilent influence of a form, that was not made to be forgotten: and it wou'd be all in vain, ſhou'd I retreat to the world's utmoſt limits, you wou'd be with me there, my meditation and my proſpect. You only have engroſs'd my heart; you only muſt engage my ſenſes.

I hear, at my return, new inſtances of your great goodneſs, (who never meant to give a pain, yet do it, while you pity)---Why are you ſo ſeverely kind, to ſuffer me to think of ſeeing you? How can I bear the trial of ſo anxious a delight? It will be tranſport mixt with miſery, too touching to be wiſely cover'd, and too ſerious to be ſafely hazarded.---If abſence cannot ſcreen me, how is it poſſible I ſhou'd ſuſtain the thouſand dangers of your converſe?---when I muſt compare my ſenſe of what I ſee and feel in your ſociety, with my remembrance that it is a bliſs, you have forbidden me the greateſt claim to?

And yet, what eaſe, what mitigation, can I hope in diſtance?——On one ſide 'tis deſpair, and on the other, agony.---I know not how I ought to act. I am unable to ſupport your preſence, under ſenſe of the reſtraint you bind me to. I am more unable to ſupport my life, made taſteleſs to me by your abſence.

What was there, moſt deſirable, and moſt faultleſs, yet moſt cold *** ? What cou'd you apprehend in my ſolicitation, that deſerv'd a prohibition, of ſuch conſequence to my felicity?——My paſſion was no light effect of ſuddenneſs, or fancy: it had its birth from your experienc'd excellence; its growth from my reflection, and my judgment.—I endeavour'd to ſuppreſs it, long before you had the leaſt idea of my feeling it; becauſe I feared

feared I cou'd not give you back, that happineſs I ſhou'd have ow'd you: I mean, that ſympathetic, inſelt happineſs, the happineſs of minds: for fortune cannot furniſh it.—I therefore had no thought of yours, unleſs to have enlarg'd it.---That wou'd indeed have been my ſtudy, and my pride;---for tho' I ſhun all gayety myſelf, I know you born for ſhining.---I made it my entreaty, that you wou'd, by proper previous ſettlements, have cut off, from my claim, all right, but to your mind, and perſon. There only lay the treaſure of my hopes---there only, the ambition of my purpoſe.

But I am in the wrong perhaps, to dwell upon this ſubject, ſince you wiſh me to decline it.---Forgive me the reſiſtleſs diſcompoſure---and, may you long live undiſturb'd, and happy!---Permit me, only, to remember, and to love you; and to carry on, to death, this dear unalterable conſciouſneſs, of ſoft reſpectful tenderneſs, ſo due, from

Madam,

your everlaſting devoted ſervant,

A. HILL.

LETTER VI.

*——My Heart's laſt wiſh! My dear, my lov'd ***!*

SURE, ſome unlucky ſpirit hover'd over and miſled my pen, when it was capable of giving pain, where all the mingled pleaſures of this life wou'd be too little to expreſs my wiſhes! Yet, do not ſay that I refus'd---even to deſtroy your letters. I wou'd deſtroy myſelf, to ſave you from a grief, or pain: and therefore dare not let my fondneſs for thoſe ſacred treaſures prevail againſt the reverence,

reverence, and the honour, which are due to their dear writer. Yet, if there ever comes a day, when you resolve to diſpoſſeſs me of their beauties, expect not I can treat 'em in the manner which you mention. It will be cruelty enough, to bid me re-deliver them. So far I can, and will obey, ſhou'd you condemn me to the trial, as rather to give up my heavenly converſe with your ſpirit, in thoſe breathings of its angel purity, than be the cauſe, however undeſignedly, of half a moment's apprehenſion, to your too refin'd, and never to be equal'd delicacy.

But, when you ſpeak of having writ your ſentiments with too much frankneſs: ——with ſuch freedom, as that matchleſs life cou'd give no other inſtance of! Such charming words at once tranſported, and aſtoniſh'd me! I look'd,--and ſearch'd again; I linger'd over every dear, and well-known ſyllable. Again, I weigh'd, in the moſt partial, and moſt ſtretch'd ſignification, every meaning of each modeſt paragraph. ——And, ſince it was impoſſible to find the ſmalleſt ſhadow of a cauſe for this enchanting fear, in any thing you have expreſs'd, my heart, that catches at the weakeſt hope, to ſave itſelf from anguiſh, had almoſt flatter'd me, that your divine compaſſion might have meant ſome ſenſibility in my behalf, which you but barely purpos'd in your ſecret boſom; and then feared, you had been kind enough, to bleſs me with the ſweet confeſſion of.

It wou'd be to affect ſtupidity, not to perceive I am more bleſs'd, in this, than you deſign'd to make me. The ſweet diſorder of your groundleſs doubt half charms me to preſume, I am not quite indifferent to you. And the dear, unmeant diſcovery is happineſs, above all gratitude: and never to be felt with too much joy, nor own'd with too much honour.

Shou'd I be thus beyond my apprehenſion happy, ſhou'd ſympathy for one, whoſe ſoul was form'd to take in all your lovelineſs and influence, have mov'd your pity to this generous ſenſe of what I ſuffer if divided from you, why, my ſeverely lovely, and too rigid apprehender!

why muſt you not confeſs it to me? Why will you not permit me to expect ſome future poſſibility of being yours, in a more dear engagement, even than that of friendſhip? Why will you not remove that dreadful bar, of your declar'd reſolve? Why am I to be held debarr'd from the delightful bliſs of conſecrating the uncertain limit of my years to come, to the reſpectful tenderneſs of living but to ſerve you? of watching over your wiſh'd health? of finding mitigation for your griefs, when ſometimes unavoidable? of always heightening your propos'd felicities? enlivening your retirement with the homeſelt ſweets of converſe? and partaking your ſociety, in public pleaſures, with a pride and conſciouſneſs of your obſerv'd perfections? receiving, and returning, all thoſe ſoftners of the humane ſoul, which make life elegant and comfortable: and which Heaven enabled us to feel, by way of balance for its ſhortneſs, and uncertainty?

A mind ſuperior, as yours is, to all your ſex's dangers, or their levities, ſhou'd alſo be above their doubts, and apprehenſions. You cannot be deceived in paſſion. You judge, and reaſon, with too guarded an exceſs of caution. You know how to diſtinguiſh truth from light pretence, and inſincerity: and, knowing this, muſt know, he cannot fail to be unhappy, who is fill'd, as I am, with your image, yet kept diſtant by your coldneſs.

Be then, ſo nobly frank, no longer to accuſe yourſelf unjuſtly—but, in real earneſt bleſs me, with the hope you now but ſeem to have permitted me. I cannot think of peace, unleſs you favour me.——As to regard of fortune, 'tis too poor a thing for paſſion. Yet, ſo far is outward happineſs concern'd in its advantages, that you will teach me to love riches, from the ſplendor they might ſhew your beauties in.

Be ſo endearingly compaſſionate to bid me entertain this hope, and I will lay aſide ſome purpoſes, that elſe, will lead me diſtant from the power to charm my ſoul in your belov'd ſociety.——So bleſſed, I will forget all cares, and watch in your angelic eyes, for that ſweet fu-

ture

ture moment, which can, when you pleaſe, tranſport, with one dear word of my divine ***

Her then, ever happy,
and moſt tenderly devoted ſervant,

A. HILL.

LETTER VII.

MADAM,

THERE is a beauty in your Tueſday's letter, above all imitation but your own. It glows in every paragragh, with all the warming influence of its too lovely writer: yet, (like her too) carries coldneſs in the meaning of each froſty ſweetneſs.

Before I thank you for your dear eſteem,——(and yet; did ever Greenland breathe an air; ſo icy, as that word; *Eſteem!*—) forgive me, for beginning at your poſtſcript.

What have you written to me, my too refin'd, my doubting charmer! that you need to wiſh the flames enriched with?—or, even ſuppoſe you had been ſo divinely tender, what have I ever done, to merit ſuch a cruel caution?——All chilling as your letters are, I guard 'em at my heart. By that alone I trace their apprehenſive lovelineſs, with ſilence, dark as the world's pleaſures in your abſence; and ſacred, as the reverence due to your accompliſh'd virtues—You, Madam, and you only, ſhall command 'em, as you pleaſe: But, while you are ſo good to leave 'em in my care, I will not part with 'em; but at the grave.—From that laſt ſtage, I will again return 'em you.

As for my ſuffering, I almoſt wiſh it was not real, ſince you think it worth your pity.——I would not give you half a minute's pain, for all the joy and happineſs 'tis in your power to bleſs me with.——But, for myſelf, I feel the pangs you have condemn'd me to, in too ſincere a manner, not to look for, and reſign myſelf to an

affliction, I ſhou'd hate my heart if it were capable of ſhunning.

If I had never ſeen the dear ***, I too might have reſolved like her, againſt a ſecond tenderneſs. But, both in ſpirit, and in perſon, you were form'd for all my paſſion; and I muſt have had no ſoul at all, or felt it charm'd by your impreſſion.—Had it pleas'd his liberal hand, that gave you this inimitable excellence, that you had thought me worth poſſeſſing it, or that I ſhou'd have ſeen you, with un-entering eyes, all taſteleſs and unmoved, like faſhionable friends and lovers, you would never have been preſs'd by ſuch unwiſh'd addreſſes——and I might have been eaſy, tho' not happy, without dreaming there was ſuch a bliſs to wiſh for.

You are ſweetly condeſcending in your cruelty, when you invite me to partake, in common with the happier branches of my family, the charming privilege of ſometimes ſeeing you.——No, my too dear miſtaker! your tender ſpirit wou'd not wiſh me ſuch inſufferable torture. It wou'd be the puniſhment of Divea, to lift up my eyes in agony, and ſee the heaven I am ſhut out of.——Live, ever undiſturb'd, and waſte no thought on me.——Be bleſs'd, beyond all womankind, as I am ſure, you are adorn'd beyond 'em!——Riſe, every hour, if poſſible, increaſing in felicities.——I never will invade the quiet of your wiſh'd enjoyments——But, while I labour to forget myſelf, will beg you alſo to forget me.

It is the mark of real paſſion to give up all ſelf, and find its happineſs, in that of its dear object.——In this ſharp tryal, I will prove myſelf a lover not unworthy of your pity.—I will teach my ſtruggling ſoul the hard ſubmiſſion to your order: and preſume no more to ruffle your wiſh'd calm of life with any whiſper of his ſufferings, who muſt, in life, and death, for ever find himſelf,

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your unchangeably devoted ſervant,

A. HILL.

FINIS.

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